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# Panther Magazine, January 19, 2017

Florida International University

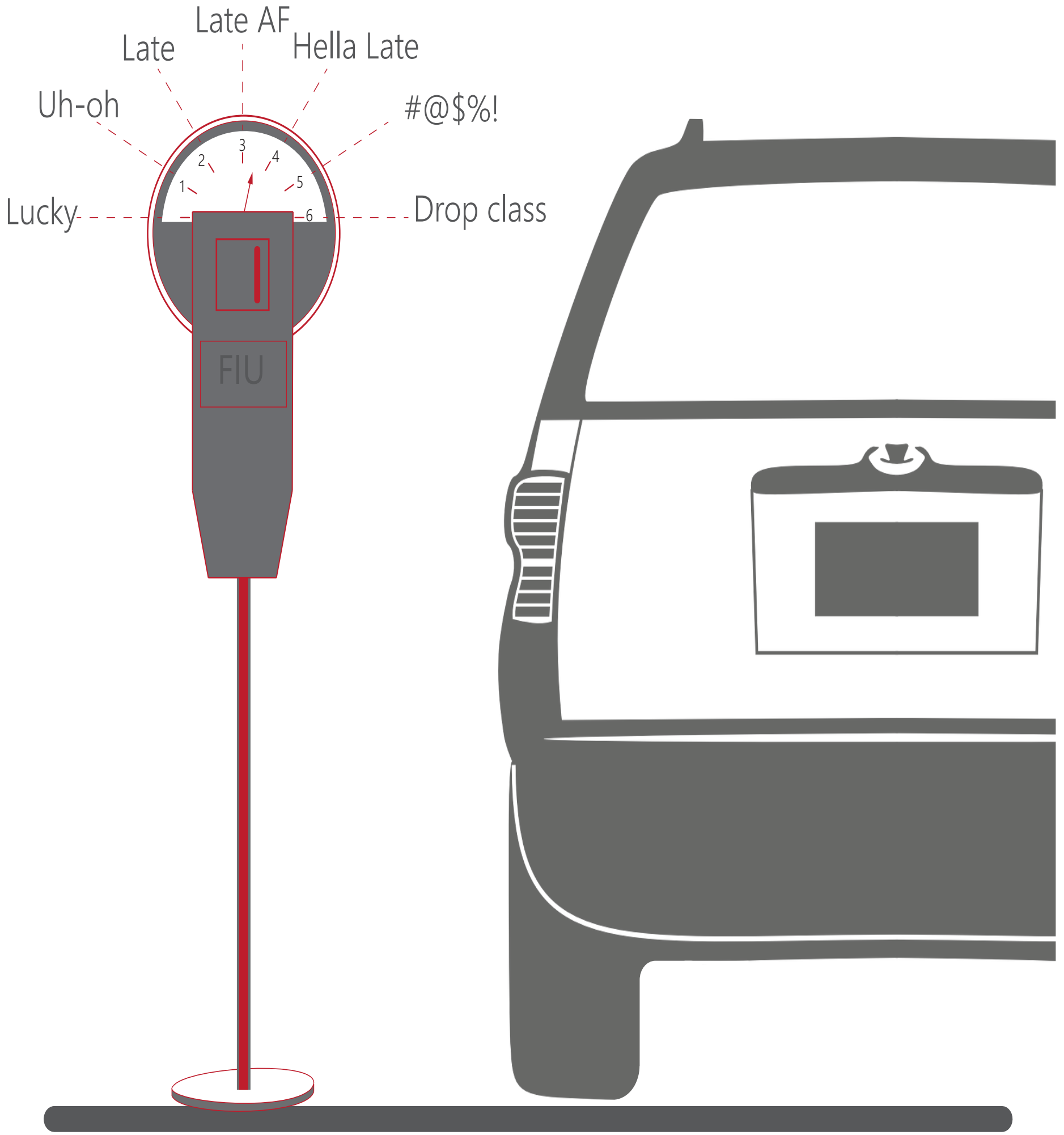
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# ~~P~~arking Perils

# PARKING PANIC

## Residents, commuters discuss University parking



GUETHSHINA ALTENA/PANTHER PRESS

University traffic and students crossing on SW 9th avenue and University drive by the parking garage 5 market station on Tuesday January 17th 2017

### GUETHSHINA ALTENA News Director

With less than half of students living on campus, FIU is considered a commuter school.

The department of Parking and Transportation is one of the biggest departments that deals with student, faculty and staff on campus; transportation from one campus to another and moving within the campus from one building to another.

Many students view the quality of service provided differently. Some have concerns and others are satisfied with how diligent the University is when it comes to providing safe and proper transportation for student.

Resident students and commuters disagree on the best way the University can improve their parking problems and what are the main issues that students encounter on a daily basis.

Tamara Nathai is a student assistant at the Graham Center information desk. She is a senior criminal justice major who commutes to school and parks in Gold Garage. She has had difficulties finding parking multiple times and has been late to her classes a few times as a result of that.

“I know that FIU has a lot of parking garages already but I feel like we should have more parking spots or do a better job at helping students find parking,” she said.

Nathai does not think that the boards outside of the parking garages help a lot. The boards are supposed to tell drivers if there is parking in the garage but the little info they offer is not sufficient in helping people find parking according to Nathai.

“When I used to live on campus, I took the bus to the Engineering Center and now I notice that it improved a lot; the [departure] times are now a lot more frequent and that really helps students,” she said. “The department is doing a good job when it comes to that.”

Nathai recommends other students who drive to get to campus early, about 13 minutes before their class in order to avoid being late since MMC is a busy campus.

Kiara Roberson is a sophomore psychology major who recently learned the difficulties of parking on campus.

“I just started driving this semester and since there was not a lot of people here during the winter break, I found it quite easy so far to park and drive around campus” Roberson said

Emmalie Morisseau however disagrees.

“I have been here all four years and I find the parking situation to be terrible,” the senior computer engineer major said. “When I come during rush hours, it has taken me as much as 20 minutes to find parking on campus.”

Morisseau usually park in Gold Garage and sometimes for both work in school, she has to wake up early to be on campus around 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. and find a good parking spot.

“At the Engineering Center, the Parking and Transportation department needs to have more service available to help students with cars over there,” Morisseau said. “I have had a few instances where I was able to find help from them when I need a jumpstart.”

“The one advice I will always have for other students is get here early, as early as you can,” Roberson said. “Try to get here 15 to 20 minutes before the start of your class.”

Adonas Puente is a sophomore psychology major who lives on campus.

“For students like me who live on campus, parking is a little easier. There is always parking after students, staff and faculty leave campus and I don’t have to worry about people taking up my spot because residential students have their cars in designated parkings,” he said.

Juan Jose is a freshman journalism major who commutes to FIU. He says he has been late to classes before because of the long delay to find parking on campus.

“It’s freaking terrible, it sucks so bad; when I had a car, I had spent an hour looking for parking and I ended up just giving up and parking across the street at Publix,” Jose said.

Jose thinks that it’s best to come to school two hours early especially if you have an exam to make sure that you are not late even if it’s the worst case scenario.

Vanessa Louis, a finance major, Alkania Hepburn, nursing major, and Ruth Joseph, marketing major, are three first-year students who live on campus.

As residents, they are satisfied with most of the services that the Parking and Transportation department offer. Though they believe that improvements can be made.

Hepburn owned a car that she used to drive on campus, the frustration of not finding parking discouraged her and she just went back home.

“Sometimes it’s a good idea to get to campus at least an hour and 30 minutes before class because finding parking can be close to impossible at some hours,” Hepburn said.



## ACCESS & AFFORDABILITY

The place to get information on university metrics, college affordability, financial aid options and access from University President Mark B.

Rosenberg and Financial Aid Director Francisco Valines.

Moderated by Raquel Perez.

# Students speak out on transportation issues with the University GPE shuttle busses

**CEYLINE ARIAS**  
Staff Writer

According to the University's Parking and Transportation website, there is a wide range of options for students in need of transportation between MMC and the satellite campuses BBC and Engineering center, as well as for those looking to explore outside the University.

The Golden Panther Express, the University's most widely used shuttle for students and faculty alike, "provides an alternative to driving between FIU's main campuses: Modesto A. Maidique campus and Biscayne Bay campus," according to FIU's Transit website.

Though the GPE shuttle provides a wide range of services during a student's commute, including free Wi-Fi, installed security cameras on the shuttles in order to insure and enhance student, staff and faculty safety, many students share the concern that the pricing of the bus fare is something to take into consideration before attempting to use the GPE shuttle.

"It doesn't make sense for me to be paying for a trip to the other campus when it even says on your tuition payment

that if you pay a small fee for transportation, you are covered for the semester and you certainly don't see that with this bus," said Sandro Alvarez, a sophomore communication arts major.

Currently, students pay

and Transportation website, "A Parking and Transportation Access Fee is assessed to all students per semester as part of their enrollment. This fee funds maintenance of parking facilities, sidewalks, garages, emergency call boxes, bicycle

continued Gonzalez.

Gonzalez is not the only student feeling troubled by the expense that comes along with using one of FIU's transportation, however.

"I understand that the driver needs to have a monetary

provide a "Knight Flight," which is a free shuttle bus from the UCF main campus to Orlando International Airport (MCO) before seasonal breaks including Thanksgiving break, Winter break, and Spring break, a service FIU does not offer.

"I honestly can't wrap my head around this. This shouldn't even be something that we, as students, should have to pay for. There's plenty of universities that offer bus and shuttle services for free. What's so different about them? Why is it taking FIU forever to do the same?" said Gonzalez.

According to a previous Student Media article from October 2015, "FIU does not own the shuttles, but rents charter vehicles from Academy, a private transportation company originally based in New Jersey."

"We hired Academy bus," said Thomas Hartley, executive director of the Department of Parking and Transportation. "That's what the cost of providing the service is. If you charged everybody who rode, you'd have to charge everybody \$5. But students get it at \$2.50 because the other \$2.50 comes from student fees," according to the article.

We hired Academy bus, That's what the cost of providing the service is. If you charged everybody who rode, you'd have to charge everybody \$5. But students get it at \$2.50 because the other \$2.50 comes from student fees,

Thomas Harley  
Executive Director  
Department of Parking and Transportation

\$2.50 and non-students and affiliates pay \$5.00. Included in FIU student's tuition is, however, a transportation fee of approximately \$90.

Melissa Gonzalez, a sophomore biology major, expresses her concerns regarding the strain paying for fare between both campuses is causing her financially.

According to the Parking

rack program, lighting, etc."

Gonzalez, however, does not seem convinced.

"If that's true, why are students paying to use a service that should be free? I don't get where the money we pay at the beginning of the semester goes. Is that "fee" we pay even being used for parking and transportation necessities because it doesn't seem like it,"

incentive, but the fact that I have to pay extra for a bus that should have been covered by my tuition payment should be non-existent," said Alvarez.

In fact, other public universities such as the University of Central Florida and University of Florida offer free shuttles services to its students.

UCF has gone so far as to

## University inaugurates Martin Luther King, Jr. busts

**GUETHSHINA ALTENA**  
News Director

The installment of the Martin Luther King, Jr bust at The Biscayne Bay Campus is the first MLK bust in the North Miami area according to commissioner Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.

On Thursday, Jan 12, the University hosted a ribbon cutting for the bust at BBC by Academic Center 1. The following day, on Friday, Jan 13 the ribbon cutting of another MLK bust at the Modesto Maidique Campus took place right after a commemorative breakfast in between the Graham Center and the Green Library.

Many participated in the ribbon cutting at the MMC including the director of Multicultural Programs and Services Dorret Sawyers, Commissioner Bovo of the Miami Dade County, District 13 and the Black Student Union president Nykeema Radway.

University President Mark B. Rosenberg delivered his remarks and recognized Ysmelio Lopez and his family for sculpting the two busts.

Lopez, from Cimagos Nursery, donated the sculpture to FIU, along with a similar one that is now located at BBC.

Guests at the MMC ribbon cutting included the Martin Luther King Committee, the Black Student Union members, the Alpha Phi Alpha- Tau Delta and other students organizations.

"The University is committed to learning both in and out of the classroom, Martin Luther King is an historic leader in the world," Rosenberg said. "My idea was to celebrate Dr. King because there is a lot of lessons that Dr. King taught and continues to teach with his view of the world, his commitment to nonviolence and social justice."

Rosenberg believes that the commemorative bust would be a wonderful way to send the message that social justice matters and doing the right thing matters.

"I am anxious for thousands of people to see the sculpture and this is one of the most special places we have on this campus [MMC] as well as the location at the Bay Biscayne for a bust." Rosenberg said. "It provides the opportunity for people to pause and contemplate the lessons that Dr. King taught and to question their relationship to those lessons and what they can do to help improve the world."

Rosenberg wants Dr. King to be present with the thousands of people and students pass by this area everyday.

At MMC, it is right across from the Green Library which is one of the most visited places on campus. At BBC, the bust is placed by the Academic Center 1 which is right across the bus stop where a lot of students get off. The accessibility of the locations is why president Rosenberg thinks it's the perfect spot for both campuses.

"Courage to do the right thing" is the message that the president is sending to all those who pass by the sculpture.

"The most important thing about Dr. King is that he had the courage to step up and to provide hope and leadership; he did the right thing" president Rosenberg said

"Dr. King was a person that the times required and he stepped up and so it should be with our students. The times that require them to step up and do the right thing, you don't know when, you don't know where."

The Black Student Union played a key role in the realization of the ribbon cutting and the preparations leading up to it. According to the BSU president, Nykeema Radway, the University included them in every part of the process leading up to the commemorative event.

The vice president of BSU Rashaad Perry-Patterson is a senior graduating in spring who majors in political science. He was heavily involved in the choosing of the location for the MLK bust at the MMC campus.

"This is the Student Union [pointing at the Graham Center] this is one of the first places that were build at FIU campus, so we chose this location for the bust because of that and because of the heavy traffic and the proximity to the library," he said. "Given that GC and the library bring a lot of student engagement with campus life, the BSU office, sororities and fraternities close

by, we felt like it was a significant area and more feasible place for students to see it."

Radway was invited to speak at the ribbon cutting commemoration at MMC.

"I really hope that this sculpture is empowering just by the sight of it. I think for me when I look at it, it's symbolic to the fact that change can simply start with a dream," Radway said.

She believes that King was an everyday man who just decided not to look past social injustice and inequalities.

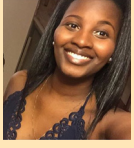
"Today is the day to create the change that you want and speak out against any injustice that you see around you," she said. "Martin Luther King fought for everyone and he was a very significant figure within the black community."

Radway is honored to help give a voice to and uplift the black students of the University by participating in the ribbon cutting on behalf of the Black Student Union. She believes that this bust will forever be engraved in FIU's history and the Black Student Union history.

"Walking past this bust, I want people to challenge their inner Martin Luther King. Not to downplay who he was, but King was a man who chose not to be silent and that's what we can do," Radway said.

# PARKING CHRONICLES

ONE MARTINI, PLEASE



MARTINA BRETOIS

It always starts out the same way: a race to the elevator entrance at the sight of anyone entering the garage followed by a head popping out of a lowered car

window yelling “Are you leaving?” Four years at this University and about 60 percent of conversations I overhear consist of three things: complaining about parking, complaining about textbooks, and more complaining about parking.

From the Starbucks line in the Green Library to the elevator ride in MANGO, everyone is wondering why finding parking on campus is so difficult. Or rather venting out their frustration in an expletive-filled sentence.

A few years ago, when I was a freshman full of optimism and hope for the college life, I pictured entering the Gold Garage every day, parking on the first floor available to students while singing to great music on the radio.

I should have known from the “great music on the radio” part that my fantasy wasn’t going to mirror reality. The radio is like the artist Pitbull, it takes great music and ruins it with an awful remix no one ever asked for, or is that just 96.5? Either way, I digress.

I had big freshman dreams no one could crush. That was until I missed a class on the first day of the spring semester because I couldn’t find parking. Now, as a senior, I serve as a cautionary tale for every



CAYLA BUSH /PANTHER PRESS

in efforts to get a parking space in Gold Garage, students line up in their cars next to the elevator doors on the fourth floor.

freshman who seeks to enter one of the three garages I now call the evil three: Gold, Blue and PG5.

To my surprise, parking is just as daunting for faculty as it is for students. With multiple floors left exclusively to faculty, I assumed the only trouble they had was finding one too early and having to kill time. But, you know what they say about assuming.

While standing in front of the pay machine for visitor parking once, a faculty member and I realized we were members of the FIU community paying for parking. We jointly shook our heads in frustration, paid our hourly fee and went about our day.

Nowadays, I alternate between

that and what everyone does: creepily and aggressively following students from the elevator doors with a blinker marking them as mine for the next 45 seconds until they reach their car.

However, for every parking spot you’ve gotten quickly, there’s a time you followed someone who says they’re “parked around the corner.”

You breathe a sigh of relief, silently laughing at the poor suckers still waiting for a spot.

It’s not until a look of confusion sprawls across their face that you realize you’ve made a big mistake. They’re on the wrong floor, or better yet, the wrong building.

So for 75 cents a day, the daily

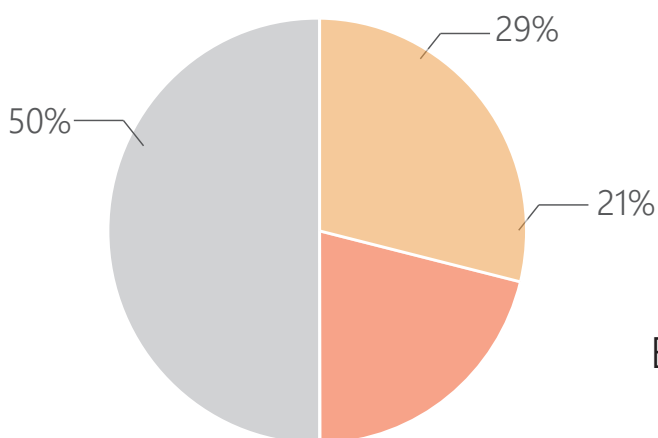
cost of parking as stated in our tuition, you can continue to enjoy endless car lines in front of every floor of the parking garages and confused students who don’t know what floor they’ve parked on.

But wait, there’s more. If you call the University right now, you will also get unlimited access to the terrible individuals who ignore your blinker and steal the parking spot you waited 20 minutes and half of a Pitbull song to get.

*One Martini, Please is a column about a broad range of issues that affect students.*

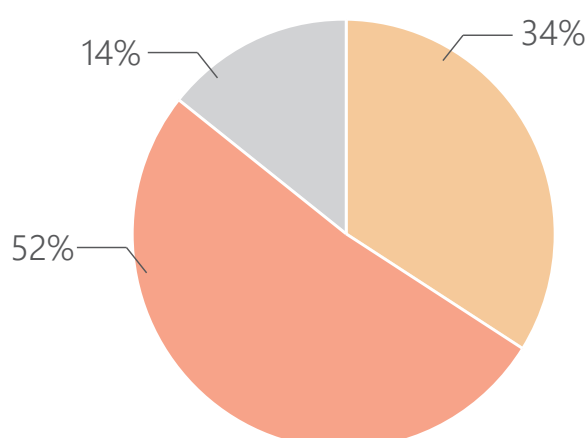
## Metered parking popular alternative at BBC

### Modesto Maidique Campus



80 students and faculty were polled at MMC and BBC within the first week of school on their parking habits on campus.

### Biscayne Bay Campus



Key:

- Has never parked illegally or in visitor parking
- Has parked illegally
- Parked in metered (visitor) space

**JULIANE SUNSHINE**  
Contributing Writer

With the student body reaching nearly to 54,000, parking has become a big issue for members of the FIU community. The Parking and Transportation Department manages 16,000 parking spaces on both campus.

Back in 2011, former executive director for the department said supply of parking spaces was not the problem.

“Convenience next to the buildings is always going to be a problem when you have 40,000 students and 8,000 faculty and staff at MMC and it’s the busiest time of the day,” he said.

To hear from members of the community about their parking habits on campus, 12 faculty members and 69 students at The Biscayne Bay Campus and the Modesto Maidique Campus were polled during the first week of the spring semester.

The results are as follows: at MMC, 50 percent have never parked illegally or in visitor parking, 29 percent have parked illegally and 21 percent have parked in a metered parking space usually reserved for visitors.

In this context, illegally means any undesignated parking spot: faculty, administrative, student of the year, handicap, etc.

NIA YOUNG/PANTHER PRESS

**SEE POLLING, PAGE 5**

# GARAGE RANKINGS

*Gold comes in last place*

KAY SAYS



KAYLEEN PADRON

Every student knows the struggles of finding parking throughout the semester. So the real question is, which one is the hardest place to find a parking spot? Using 1-6 scale, with 1 being the hardest and 6 the easiest, here is how I rank the garages.

## 6

The ever-trusty red garage, also known as PG4, will be rated as a solid 6. Because this older garage is settled between two of the most busiest lots, it's usually empty. Be prepared for the morning workout though; with all those flights of stairs, it could definitely get your blood pumping for those way-too-early classes.

## 5

Blue garage comes at a close second with a 5 rating. Although it's further away from the Graham Center, it's still closer to the center of the University than the rest of the garages. As the neglected step sister to Gold, it offers a great view of the Frost Art Museum,

which can make your trek to class so much better.

Parking is usually easier here because a few lots surround it, especially the large parking area next to the bus stops.

## 4

Coming in with a 4 rating, the brand-new PG6 building is a great garage with quick elevators and the best on-campus empanada stop located on the first floor.

In addition to parking spaces available to students on the first level ramp—a luxury not offered in other garages—it offers way more students spots than almost every garage at FIU and the new sign outside the garage letting students know what level has available parkign is a huge time saver.

## 3

Panther garage, or PG3, has a 3 rating. Because of the gym and nature trail, parking can be hard to find at times. To think people have time to exercise and live healthy during finals week is beyond me, but try avoiding this garage during after-lunch hours. Unless you want to park next to an 8-foot vehicle with "Cool Story, Bro" stickers inches away from crossing the white line.

## 2

PG5 is home to Moe's, Dunkin' Donuts and Papa John's, the college student's triad of weakness. That and its proximity to almost every important building on campus, makes it one of the hardest garages to find parking.

After all, who can resist finding a good parking spot and a warm donut early in the morning? Whatever you do, don't try looking for spots here during lunch time; hungry college students are not the nicest drivers.

## 1

Drum roll, please. The award for worst parking garage goes to Gold Garage. Any student of faculty member who has been here for more than a semester will see the shock value of its No.1 ranking as minimal.

As a freshman and newly-taught driver, I always kept my distance from this garage from hell. Close to the elevators you can find a row of cars as long as the line at Pollo Tropical at 12 p.m., waiting for exiting students.

It makes you contemplate the pros of taking 7 a.m. classes, as it's the only time you can find a spot in this garage.

*Kay Says is a column about a broad range of issues that affect students.*

## Polling asks students about their parking habits

POLLING, PAGE 4

I found that the majority of freshmen polled at both the Modesto Maidique and Biscayne Bay have never parked illegally or in the visitor sections for fear for tickets.

However, seniors openly talked about regularly parking in the visitor section or illegally of the hassle of finding parking.

When major events happen at school, parking is "impossible," said one senior. Students either pay their fines, appeal the tickets they receive, while some students have yet to get caught.

But students aren't the only people parking illegally, faculty members of the school said they don't have enough spots and drive around looking for an area to park in and it becomes

tiresome, thus results in parking in the visitor section without paying as they already pay fees per semester for parking.

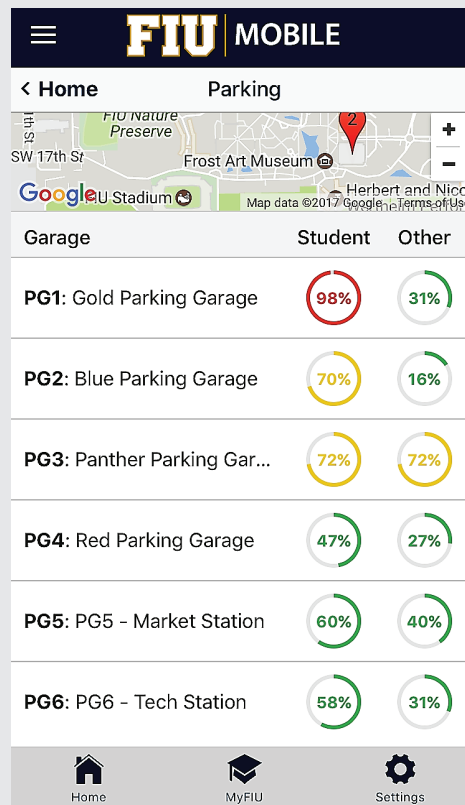
All seven faculty members polled at BBC answered yes when asked if they have parked illegally or in metered spaces.

Part of the reason why some students park illegally or in visitor is their reluctance to walk a long distance to their destination on campus.

One student polled says she has trouble finding parking at the main campus, is usually in a rush and doesn't want to walk far.

Overall results showed that metered parking at BBC is used far more often than at MMC.

## Parking Hacks



### FIU Mobile

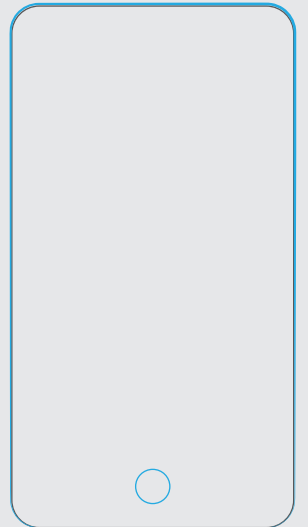
On the FIU Mobile application, students can log onto MyFIU, see the course catalog, places to eat on campus. One highlight from the application many may overlook is the ability to get parking updates right from your phone.

It allows you to plan ahead, save some time and decide which garage you will park in before even getting to campus.

### Ride Flag

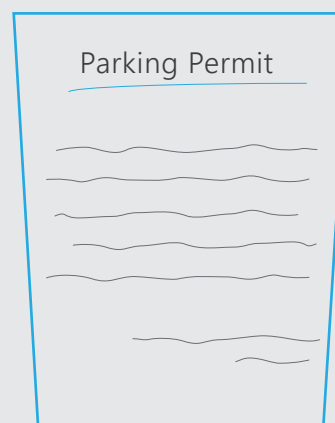
A new app, Ride Flag, has made commuting to campus so much easier. The Parking and Transportation Department partnered with the app and it allows students and employees from the University connect with other Panthers and coordinate rides.

After downloading the app, you must create a login using your FIU email and join the "FIU circle." Reduce driving time and costs, connect with people from the FIU community and get this app.



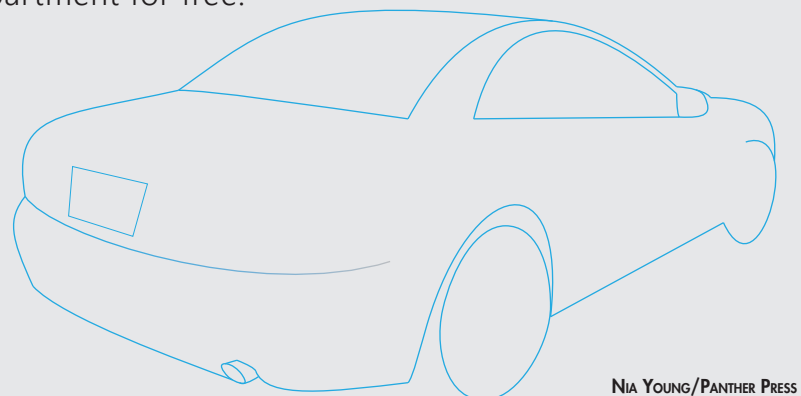
### Registering a Car

Students living on campus are limited to one parking spot and for those who don't have a car, that spot often stays vacant. To avoid the hassle of finding visitor parking, students can register their visitor's car on parking.fiu.edu.



### Temporary Pass

For times when you have a rental car, your car's in the shop or just using your parent's car for the day, you can get a temporary pass from the Parking and Transportation Department for free.



# #DRIVINGSTRUGGLES

## Zipcar rentals are an option for students stranded on campus

THE LEVELER



AUBREY CARR

Anyone who has ever visited Miami is well aware of the struggles that accompany not having a car or a friend with one.

Students who live on campus without access to a vehicle are nearly stranded; even getting groceries at the nearest Publix can be miles away from the dorms most centrally located on campus.

But there may be an answer to taking that day trip to Wynwood or an

alternative to carrying no more than two bags of groceries at a time across the highway.

FIU recently partnered with Zipcar, a company that has been renting out vehicles for 18 years.

Students pay \$15 – a discounted price thanks to sponsorship from Ford – and can use a car for as little as an hour to as long as a week, so a quick trip to the doctor’s office or a road trip to New Orleans are equally as possible.

Insurance and gas costs are included in the application and annual fee, making for even less hassle than a normal rental.

Of course, there are limitations on who can join Zipcar. The student must be a licensed driver in any country, at least 18, and

must have no more than a maximum of two driving incidents within the past three years and zero in the

your wallet.

On the whole, this is a brilliant idea. Miami is one of the world’s greatest

“If you’re under 25, Zipcar can be the least expensive way of going about getting a rental car.”

past eighteen months.

If you’re under 25, Zipcar can be the least expensive way of going about getting a rental car, since it’s challenging to find a place that will rent a car out to someone under 25 and without violating

cities and deserves to be easily explored by all who visit and inhabit it. Without a good bus or metro system, and with such a modern city plan, cars are necessary to see more than the shelter of FIU’s campus.

The only concerning part of Zipcar relates to its fueling system. As mentioned, gas costs are covered with the one-time application fee and the annual membership fee. This means that when you need to fuel up, you use the Zipcar card you receive as a member and the bill is sent to the company.

At first, this sounds phenomenal to a broke college student, but it could negatively impact the environment if the people who use Zipcar take advantage of the company’s bank account that’s bound to be bigger than any undergraduate’s.

Zipcar seems fantastic and it’s a pleasure to have this as an option, but keep in mind that it’s not always a necessity to get around

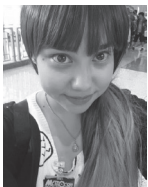
by car. Overcoming a little laziness can be a more beneficial solution to the environment and one’s health. By all means, enjoy the wonders Miami and the world have to offer, and have fun being behind the wheel!

As always, with great power comes great responsibility. Even the best rental option for a desperate college kid must be approached with the wisdom to refrain from taking advantage and creating a bigger carbon footprint.

*Aubrey Carr is a staff writer for Panther Press. Her column, The Leveler, covers global social justice and political commentary.*

## FIU continues to improve its parking situation

PANTHER HEALTH



MAYTINEE KRAMER

Being a commuter school, FIU brings in a lot of traffic, and parking is often considered a nightmare, especially during the first few weeks of classes.

As the University continues to grow in size and number, it has taken the necessary measures to ensure that its faculty, staff and students have decent and plentiful parking spaces.

A few years back, FIU did not have the many garages, virtual parking decals, apps and the garage count signs it has today.

During my freshman year, a professor actually advised my class to arrive early in the morning, just to ensure a good parking spot. From that and through experience, I learned that you had to arrive early on campus if you wanted lots of good parking spaces to choose from.

Another issue was that the University had more parking lots than parking garages. Parking lots expand outward, therefore limiting the number of spaces available. Parking garages however, expand upward and stack the car lots, therefore ensuring hundreds of spaces for commuters.

Hunting for that coveted parking spot has been made easier during the recent years with the addition of the new parking garage, PG6, and the garage counters all across campus.

“Hunting for that coveted parking spot has been made easier during the recent years.”

The counters are the biggest improvement as they help keep track of cars entering and exiting garages, and automatically update drivers on how many staff, student and administrative spaces are available in each garage.

Despite the many upgrades and improvements, however, there are still some difficulties in finding good parking. For new and returning students, I recommend these tips to ensure smooth sailing:

First, it’s always best to arrive early to campus to ensure you have lots of good parking spots to choose from. The best time to find parking is still in the early hours of the morning, usually before 8:00 a.m.

After that time, it’s more difficult to find parking as the spaces begin to fill up fast.

This can be a hassle to people who have classes later on in the day, but if they come later, they have to spend a large amount of time searching for a spot, or waiting in hopes of someone leaving campus to take their spot.

However, arriving early to campus doesn’t have to be a bad thing. It can actually be beneficial to an enriching college experience.

Aside from reducing the stress and hassle of endless searching for a parking space, spending time on campus can

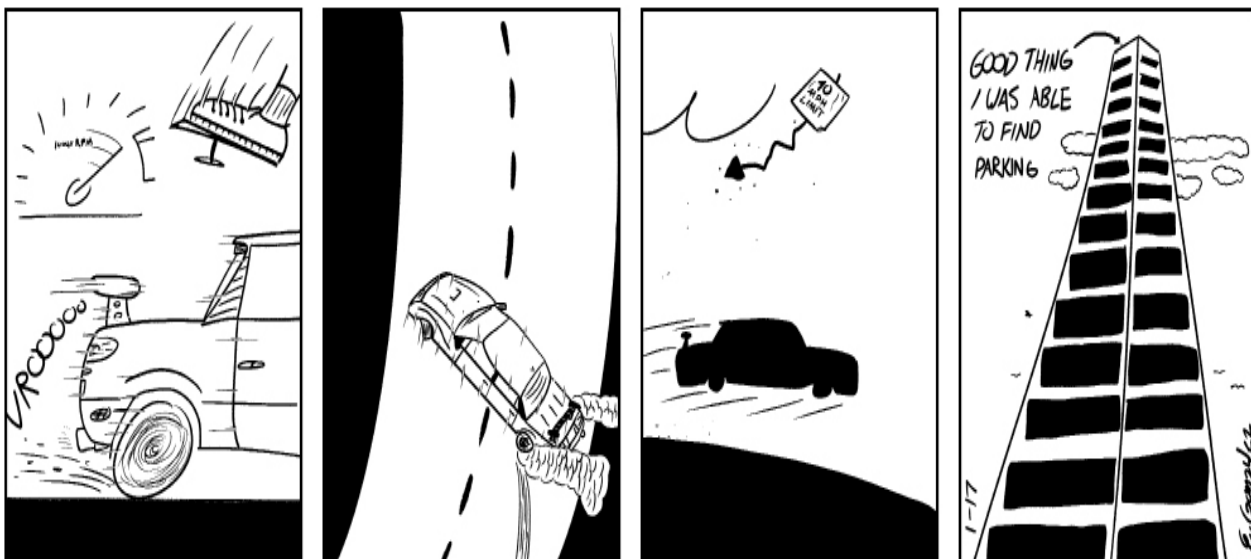
allow for more time making friends, getting involved and learning more about what FIU has to offer.

Second, it’s best to park near where your class ends. It may seem cumbersome to walk across campus for the first class, but at the end of the day, it’s much easier and faster to walk a shorter distance when you’re tired and ready to leave.

FIU is dedicated to its community and by working towards improving its parking and transportation system, the university has ensured comfort and efficiency for its faculty, staff and students.

*Maytinee Kramer is the Assistant Opinion Director for Panther Press. Her column, Panther Health, is a commentary on maintaining one’s health during college.*

### PARKING BLUES



ERNESTO GONZALEZ/PANTHER PRESS

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## PANTHER EDITORIAL

# Parking struggles affect faculty and staff, not just students

Parking on campus sucks. However, the lack of parking spaces available after 8 a.m. affects students and university employees alike. According to FIU's Analysis and Information Management Factbook, the University has 8,030 full-time and part-time staff ranging from office & administration support staff to graduate assistants. This data excludes employees of different companies like Chili's and Barnes & Noble.

Any employee working at the University—like students—must purchase a parking decal if they want to opt out of the metered parking. The more expensive the parking decal, the more accessibility you are given when it comes to parking.

However, unlike students who are limited to parking in student-designated spots, faculty and staff are able to park not just in their designated spots but in student spots as well.

For example, the administration decal, which costs \$286 a semester, gives the option of parking not just in the spaces labeled 'Admin,' but also Faculty/Staff and Student. Faculty/Staff on the other hand, ranges from \$84 to \$140, and also gives them the option of parking in student spaces.

This editorial board has noticed that more "Admin" spaces have become available in different areas of the school,

such as in the Gold Garage, but the availability of the cheaper Faculty/Staff spaces has decreased. This decrease in availability for university employees has affected the availability of student parking as employees have had to resort to parking in student spaces.

FIU's status as a commuter school should mean the University has enough parking spaces available to fulfill the need of its community. But, it doesn't.

The University's parking problem is not just a student problem, it's affects the community as a whole. Faculty and Staff should not be pressured into purchasing the more expensive Admin parking upgrade because they are unable to find a space with their decal permits. They should not have to go down the decal food chain and park in a student-designated spot and students should not have to compete with non-students for their spaces. FIU has made efforts to improve their parking situation, with the new PG 6 garage and their introduction of apps such as the FIU Parking and RideFlag, but they need to pause and plan for the future. FIU's enrollment and employment is continuing to grow, but instead of focusing on more buildings, the administration needs to plan its parking. What good is a new building if no one is able to get to it on time?

# Traffic hurts the environment

EYES ON THE EARTH



AMANDA JUNG

It's no secret that with FIU being a commuter school, it brings a lot of traffic, thus causing difficulties in finding a good parking space.

Those of you that drive to school might actually spend more time looking for a parking spot some days than you are actually in class.

But have you ever stopped to think what this extra time in traffic and parking our cars does to the environment?

The Environmental Leader tells us that "areas with the largest number of

cars on the road see higher levels of air pollution on average."

Not only is Miami a place where you often need a car to get around, but FIU is unique from a typical college campus in that many of the students commute to campus on a daily basis.

It's unusual for me to bump into someone without them telling me about how hard it was to find parking on that particular day.

It's also common to hear that some parking lots were blocked off for a special event or that Gold Garage was full and they had to park all the way over at PG 5.

While the extra time spent driving around campus to find a parking spot and sitting in traffic a few miles

from campus harms the environment, it's actually worse when cars are going at higher speeds. A car burns more fuel "while accelerating to get up to speed" according to The Environmental Leader.

In hopes of cutting the amount of cars that are on the road and the amount of time that people spend in their cars looking for parking, I propose two solutions. First, I think FIU should consider building more parking structures. This would cut the amount of time people spend circling around FIU looking for parking.

Second, I think that we all need to do our own part. When I was younger, it was exciting to hear that my friend was picking me up for school or that I was

carpooling home with a few of my neighbors.

As college students, our schedules are not always in a c c o r d a n c e with each other. However, when possible, we should carpool to classes, games and school events.

And if you live close to FIU, consider walking to school. We have enough cars on the road and not enough people taking a stand for the environment. If you were wondering how to do your part, here's your chance.

*Amanda Jung is a contributing writer for Panther Press. Her column, Eyes on the Earth, is a commentary on current global environmental issues.*

# FIU parking problems are not just in MMC but BBC

## WHAT'S UP FIU



LAQUAVIA SMITH

The University has always gone the extra mile to ensure that their faculty, staff and students are comfortable as well as in an eco-friendly, energy efficient environment.

From water-bottle re-fillers to water bottle collecting machines, FIU has thought of everything. With their newly developed parking garage, PG 6, they want to ensure that our academic experience is as smooth sailing as possible.

Over the years, FIU has made major changes that have affected us. Some of these changes include LED lights, "go green" graduation gowns and even virtual parking decals. The virtual parking decals have honestly been one of the best things Parking and Transportation could have done.

Over the years, I was so used to seeing different color sticker decals with FIU in big letters on the back window of cars and even the fuzzy adhesive left from where one tried to remove the sticker.

Now to not only avoid damage to the thousands of cars, trucks and SUV's on all of FIU's campuses, getting rid of the physical decals actually saved paper. No wonder we're the most energy efficient, eco-friendly campus in Florida.

If we think about how many students, teachers and non-instructional faculty attend our campuses just imagine how many papers were used for decals alone. I can recall one of my friends tweeting, "wow, FIU decides to go virtual after I have four parking decals ruining my Hyundai."

I laughed so hard at the tweet just thinking about her dark blue four-door sitting in the driveway of her house as if it was the spokescar for FIU. Parking decals are like lent, you can remove a little, you can remove a lot but you'll still have a few pieces left on your black jeans.

However, as a student who commutes to the BBC campus and rides the shuttle, I'm not at all affected. I can't even begin to tell you how many times I've driven into campus and spent over 20 minutes to find somewhere to park. Here is what I've learned from my experience:

Tip number one: Come early. Tip number two: Come early x2. The best time to find

parking on FIU's Biscayne Bay Campus is between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. anything after is war.

Yes, new buildings are amazing and effective, but how effective is a parking garage if your car is more than 50 miles away?

At times, I feel as if the most renovations and/or add-ons and development happens on the main Modesto Maidique campus. Don't get me wrong, BBC has recently been blessed with exceptional dormitories and a new paint job, however parking will always be an issue for us.

Aside from the parking decals and newly placed parking garage, the ability FIU gives you to switch vehicles throughout the year has helped me tremendously.

As a freshman, I never drove to school, however once I entered my sophomore year I used my mom's white Mercedes-Benz and would constantly get citations, 20 dollars here, 15 dollars there. It wasn't until I got a car of my own that I realized I needed to "add on" my vehicle.

A year later, my lovely Red two-door Fiat was added on and in business, until summer came. Later on in the year, I had to put my girl on the bench, and back to the Benz I went, however instead

of paying a fee of \$15 plus, I was able to delete my vehicle and add my mom's. Being able to edit and delete has truly saved me money and worry.

If I reminisce on the parking and traffic situation at FIU — on all campuses — I do still have a few complaints. Within the BBC community specifically, morning traffic through Alonzo Mourning High School is killer and unfair. It definitely adds on 15 minutes to my commute and I wish there was another route or a lane solely for cars traveling

to the University.

Aside from traffic, the shuttle situation is unfavorable. I've always questioned why I have a parking deduction from my tuition without it going towards my commute, at least not where I can see. If you all are unfamiliar with the Panther Shuttle, it's \$2.50 per person, per trip.

Let's say you are a Monday, Wednesday and Friday student, that's \$15 dollars a week you are spending solely to get from MMC to BBC and vice versa.

As a commuter, I find it

unfair and even inconsiderate to have to pay such a high price for transportation to a place I already pay to go.

I'm not sure when things are going to change or if they will change at all, but I do know change needs to happen and I'm pretty confident numerous students feel the same.

*Laquavia Smith is a contributing writer for Panther Press. Her column, What's Up FIU, is a commentary on the latest style and entertainment news.*

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# Drowsy driving a hazard to campus community

**JULIETA RODRIGO**  
Staff Writer

The start of a new semester can be rejuvenating, inspiring and filled with new opportunities for students. However, it can also be a dangerous time, particularly for those students who drive to campus.

Increased congestion on college campuses at the start of every semester correlates with an increase in car accidents, according to statistics released by the Brain Injury Society.

Many of these accidents are caused by drivers who are sleep deprived.

Like alcohol, sleepiness slows reaction time, impairs judgment and vision, decreases awareness and vigilance, and intensifies

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Worrying about school while you try to get sleep will affect you, and you won't wake up relaxed.

Aby Rodriguez  
Grad student  
Law

”

moodiness and aggressive behaviors.

Data released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that drowsy driving was the cause of 72,000 crashes, 44,000 injuries, and 800 deaths in 2013.

College students are particularly susceptible to sleep deprivation while school is in session, with almost three-quarters reporting that they sleep less than eight

hours every night. This statistic is troubling as the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that drivers who sleep six to seven hours a night are twice as likely to be involved in a crash as those sleeping more than eight hours, while drivers sleeping less than five hours a night increased their risk four to five times.

For students, it is imperative that we do not allow assignments, extracurricular responsibilities, and other tasks to take precedence over sleep.

Law student Aby Rodriguez told Student Media that she has driven drowsy before and it was scary.

“I had to keep the A/C on really cold and sing along to the radio so I wouldn't fall asleep,” she said.

Rodriguez also encouraged students to take naps when they can and finish their assignments before 9 p.m.

On Jan. 5, FIU's Healthy Living Program Facebook page shared an article titled “The Single Best Way to Ensure a Better Night's Sleep, Starting Tonight.”

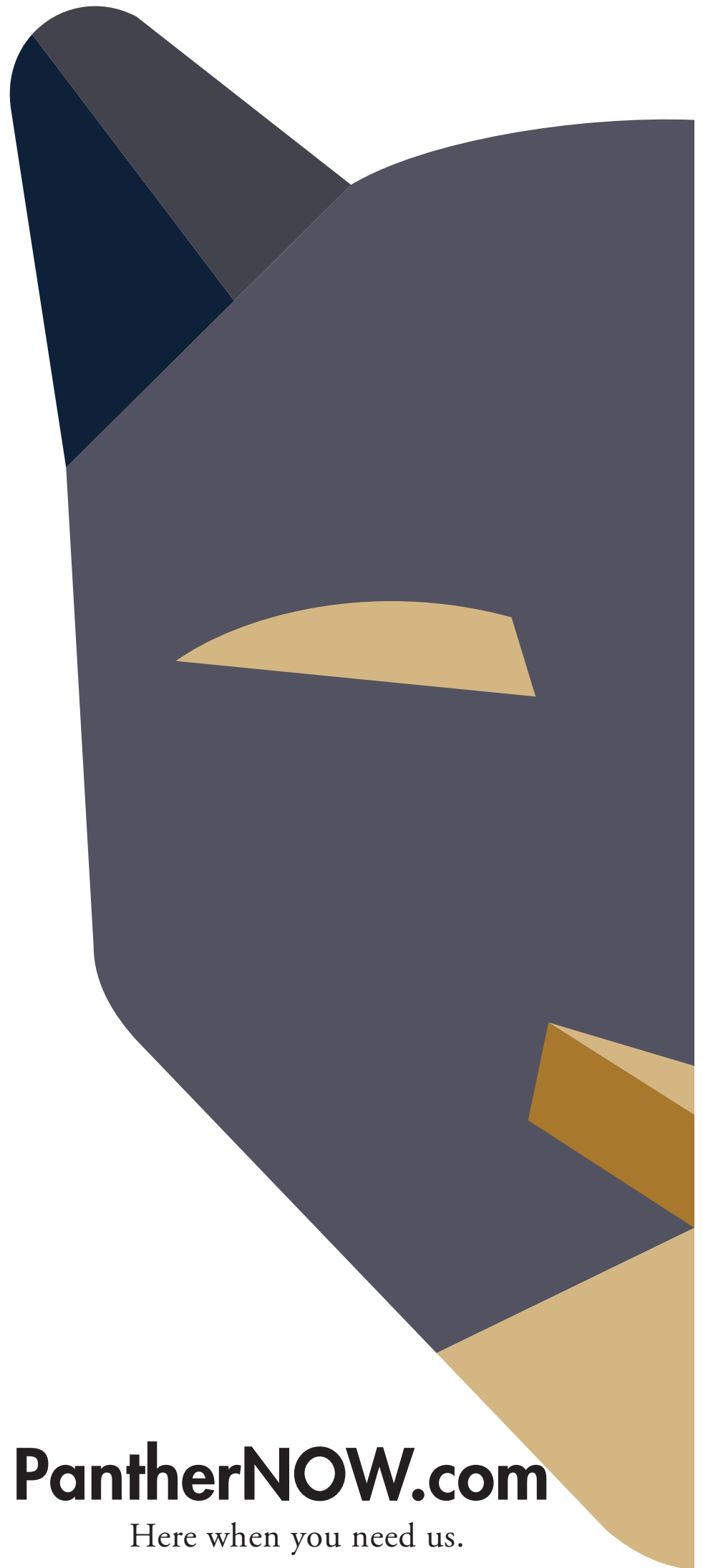
The main takeaway was the importance of “setting a bedtime and sticking to it.”

Using smartphone apps to track how much sleep you're getting is a way to ensure you are meeting your body's sleep needs every night.

While some nights may be more difficult than others because of personal obligations or homework, Rodriguez said it's best not to allow those things to affect your sleep.

“Worrying about school while you try to get sleep will affect you, and you won't wake up relaxed.”

With these tips, students can work on reversing the statistics on drowsy driving, saving lives and ensuring a more prosperous and safe future for the community around them.



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# Junior survives ‘plum ambush’ during parking war

**HEATHER O'DELL**  
Staff Writer

It was an early Monday morning, and Amanda Lorenzo, a junior majoring in logistics, was rushing to make it to her first class of the day. In addition to living in Broward County, Lorenzo is constantly frustrated with the traffic on the Turnpike.

But nothing irritates her more than the never-ending search for parking at FIU.

“I'm not sure if it's my two cups of coffee in the morning or the anticipated anxiety from trying to find a spot before my morning class, but I am always on edge come Monday morning,” Lorenzo said.

FIU is notorious for parking and traffic issues for students that commute. Although the University has improved parking by adding a new parking garage, students are still stressed over finding available parking.

Lorenzo said her worst parking experience happened

during the fall 2016 semester.

“I was circling around Red Garage for a while, and I finally saw someone backing out,” she said. “I didn't hesitate and put my blinker on right away. As soon as the car backed out, another car came and was waiting for my

“

Next thing I know, a plum was flying at my car.

Amanda Lorenzo  
Junior  
Logistics

”

same spot; I was furious.”

But Lorenzo said she was clearly there first, so she pulled in the spot.

“Next thing I know, a plum was flying at my car,” she said. “Yes, a plum.”

Lorenzo wasted so much time searching for a spot, she said she ignored the purple goo dripping from her back windshield and proceeded to her 9 a.m. class.

“As soon as it happened, I felt the blood rush to my head,” she said. “Then I thought to myself, ‘Did someone really just throw a fruit at my car over a parking spot?’ It sounds funny when you put it like that.”

Lorenzo said she and her mother, Darlene Lorenzo, usually have bad road rage. But after hearing her daughter's plum story, Darlene Lorenzo realized it is not worth it.

“Sometimes you just have to let it go,” her mother said. “It isn't worth getting upset over parking spots or traffic.”

This semester, Lorenzo hopes to avoid any “fruit wars” with any fellow panthers.

“Fighting for parking really isn't worth it,” Lorenzo said. “But hey, I did get my spot and survived a plum ambush.”