



University Senate TRANSMITTAL FORM

Senate Document #:	10-11-50
PCC ID #:	NA
Title:	Campus Safety Report 2011
Presenter:	Gene Ferrick, Chair, Campus Affairs Committee
Date of SEC Review:	April 8, 2011
Date of Senate Review:	April 21, 2011
Voting (highlight one):	Submitted as an informational item.
Statement of Issue:	The Campus Affairs Committee is charged annually with holding a campus-wide Safety Forum, gathering input on safety and security issues at the University of Maryland, and documenting these findings in a Safety Report.
Relevant Policy # & URL:	NA
Recommendation:	The Campus Affairs Committee is presenting the Campus Safety Report to the Senate as an informational item.
Committee Work:	The Campus Affairs Committee began planning their annual safety forum in November 2010. The Committee chose to focus this year's forum on traffic safety with a special emphasis on scooters and scooter safety. The Committee also created a special guest panel to highlight issues with traffic and scooter safety on campus. The panel for the forum consisted of Darryl Conway, Assistant Athletic Director; Lt. Bob Mueck, Public Safety; Lt. Phil Tou, Public Safety; Matt Riddick, DOTS (filled in for David Allen, Director of DOTS), and Gene Ferrick, Campus Affairs Committee Chair. The forum was held on February 22, 2011 in the Maryland room 0100 Marie Mount Hall.
Alternatives:	NA
Risks:	NA
Financial Implications:	NA
Further Approvals Required:	NA

Campus Affairs Committee Safety Forum Report 2011

The Campus Affairs Committee is charged with conducting a safety forum annually. This year the forum was held on February 22, 2011 in the Maryland room 0100 Marie Mount Hall. The safety forum is one of a few opportunities for members of the campus to discuss safety concerns on campus. The SGA and GSG held safety walks during the fall semester. In recent years the Campus Affairs committee has attached a theme or a focus to the safety forum. This year's focus is on traffic safety with a special emphasis on scooters and scooter safety. This year's committee also created a special guest panel to highlight issues with traffic and scooter safety on campus. The panel for the forum consisted of Darryl Conway, Assistant Athletic Director; Lt. Bob Mueck, Public Safety; Lt. Phil Tou, Public Safety; Matt Riddick, DOTS (filled in for David Allen, Director of DOTS), and Gene Ferrick, Campus Affairs Committee Chair.

The turnout for the forum was disappointing. In order to gather feedback from the community the CAC decided to set up a short survey concerning the helmet policy. This survey is available to the campus community via the senate web site. The data collected will be used as a part of the committee's consideration of the helmet policy.

Panel member and moderator Gene Ferrick gave a brief introduction and description of the Campus Affairs Committee Safety Forum and its history to the attendees. He then opened the floor to each panel member, allowing them to comment on campus traffic safety, especially in regard to scooter safety.

Lt. Bob Mueck

The underlying issue with scooters on campus is that current State law does not mandate the use of a helmet while operating a scooter. However, scooter operators must understand that when they ride their scooter they are considered a motor vehicle and therefore must abide by all state laws in place for motor vehicles or rules of the road. This is not limited to speed limits and stopping at stop signs, but extends to unlawful use on sidewalks and weaving in and out of traffic, which is considered reckless. The number of complaints involving scooters has increased substantially in the past 1-2 years. Complaints ranging from riding recklessly, the number of people on a scooter, and a large number of the complaints are related to "close calls" involving near accidents with cars and scooters. Because of this increase in complaints there has been and will continue to be a notable increase in enforcement towards scooter riders. Currently, Public Safety Officers are restricted to enforcing laws pertaining to riding on sidewalks, reckless behavior, speed limits, and number of passengers (there must be a seat and foot rest for each passenger); the enforcement of registration and helmets are not within the jurisdiction of Public Safety (currently). There is a sense that a scooter is a motorized bicycle, giving the rider a false sense of security and safety. The fact is scooters can travel at high speeds and without a helmet and proper footgear (and other protective wear) serious physical harm can occur.

Darryl Conway

The athletic department has a vested interest in traffic and scooter safety, as many of the athletes on campus utilize the perceived convenience scooters provide. However, the athletic department does not provide scooters to the student athletes despite the multitude of rumors supporting the contrary. Athletes do not receive a scooter as part of their scholarship or as reward of winning championships. This would be in direct violation of NCAA rules and regulations and the University would be put on probation if any scooter purchase were made. The athletic department does recognize that many of the

campus's scooter riders are athletes, and as such provides safety materials to the athletes at mandatory coaches meetings at the beginning of the season. The athletic department would also be in full support of a helmet policy on campus.

Matt Riddick

Scooter registration is currently free for students, staff, and faculty. This is very similar to the process used for other vehicle registration. The registration process is in place so that DOTS can provide service to the campus community, protect against thefts, and help to ensure that persons on campus are parking in the correct provided spaces. The numbers of scooters on campus has risen dramatically in recent years; in response DOTS is attempting to continually add more parking spots for scooters. The efforts for more parking spots is not only a direct reaction to the increase in numbers, but also to assist scooters to resist the temptations to park or ride on the sidewalk-which is a direct violation. Parking in non-scooter designated parking spots (sidewalks and bike racks) results in the scooter being towed, an infraction that entails a \$60 fine. The registration process for scooters will be changing in the fall; it will then cost around \$100 to register a scooter. In addition instead of a small sticker verifying registration the scooter owner will be given a small license plate. The price for towing will also increase; additionally scooters may first be booted before being towed.

DOTS main concern with traffic safety and scooters on campus deals with road sharing. The large amount of traffic on campus roads, especially main thoroughfares with buses and shuttles providing service to the campus in addition to the regular vehicle traffic, the safety of smaller motor vehicles such as scooters has become a high priority. DOTS' goals are finding better ways to educate on and enforce the proper rules of the road to scooter riders.

Gene Ferrick

The Campus Affairs Committee has been charged by the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) to consider a campus wide helmet policy for scooters. The SEC asked the committee to consider safety issues and concerns related to scooters, compare the policies of peer institutions, and consult with the Legal office and Department of Public Safety. The Legal Office has advised the committee that the University can implement a helmet policy because the University polices its own roadways. This information was obtained through contact with the Attorney Generals Office. The committee is currently attempting to collect public opinion on the subject of scooter helmets. The committee is also trying to determine how to implement a helmet policy, how it can be enforced, and whether fines can be applied to violators of the policy. The committee has been in conversations with the Office of Student Conduct, and it is the strong feeling that if a policy is put in place it should not be a Student Judiciary issue.

Open Forum

Question: How, or what method, is the committee currently leaning towards for implementation of a helmet policy? Would tickets be issued by police officers or a citation issued by a campus representative? Is it more of a legal issue or a campus issue?

Answer: The fairest method is some type of citation. Because it is not just a policy for students, but for the entire campus, staff and faculty that ride scooters would be held to the same standard. A citation would cover everyone. The committee is in the process of determining the logistics of what department can/will be in charge of issuing the citations. Currently DOTS or Police can issue parking tickets, it is hoped that this policing freedom would extend to a helmet policy and police officers would be allowed

to write citations based on University policy. The Committee is discussing how a system could be put in place for this to happen.

Question: What is the current or similar policy?

Answer: Currently, there is no helmet policy for scooters or any other mode of transportation. There is a registration policy for scooters that intend to park on campus. The purpose of registration is to help keep control of the parking situation and for safety concerns. Vehicles parked on campus are to be registered and this helps to know who is on campus. In addition, all State motor vehicle laws apply to everyone on campus. According to State law scooters must abide by all motor vehicle laws in addition to rules that apply only to scooters. For example scooters are not permitted to drive on roadways with speed limits of greater than 50 mph, and for roadways with limits up to 50 mph scooters are not allowed to operate higher than 35 mph. Many students (and other members of the public) don't realize that if, while operating a scooter, you are issued a citation in violation of any motor vehicle law, the citation will count against your driver's license. Points will be added to your license and it can affect your insurance. Under federal law scooters have all the requirements and elements of a motorcycle. It is the size of the engine that defines a scooter versus a motorcycle; above 50cc and it is considered a motorcycle. You also must have a driver's license or a valid moped permit to operate a scooter.

Question: Would it be possible to advertise or provide better education on these facts?

Answer: Education is another consideration suggested in the charge from the SEC. The Athletic Department does provide a general safety discussion to the athletes at the beginning of each year, and provides them with information. The Department of Public Safety also has safety educational flyers that have been distributed. One of the possible recommendations from the committee is that during the registration process for scooters educational information would be provided and a document would be signed stating the information was received and understood. It is also thought that this could be the time for educating the campus scooter riders about the helmet policy and the implications, if the policy is put in place.

Question: Currently under state law there is no helmet law? What about bicycles?

Answer: Currently there is no state law for scooter riders to wear a helmet. According to State law motorcycle riders must wear a helmet and anyone under the age of 16 must wear a bicycle helmet (while riding a bicycle).

Question: Where then would the policy end? Is it only scooters? What about bicycles or skateboards? All of which can be dangerous- why just scooters?

Answer: The charge from SEC was originally only for scooters probably due to the speed that scooters can go. It could be considered to go beyond scooters. There have also been a high number of accidents dealing with scooters in the recent past.

Question: Why now? Is this more of a reactionary response to the recent high profile accidents or is it proactive and a policy that the campus really wants?

Answer: The University has been taking safety steps prior to the accidents. The Department of Public Safety has been working for some time to try and get the scooters off of the sidewalks and to obey the

rules of the road. More parking has been and continues to be created for scooters. It is both pro- and reactive. Athletics has been encouraging the athletes to wear helmets since 2005, but there has not been a mandate in place for enforcing helmets to be worn.

Comment from Lt. Mueck: Everyone has a responsibility-pedestrians, bicyclists, scooter riders, and people in cars and needs to be aware of their responsibilities no matter what their mode of conveyance is. Common sense will go a long way.

Question: What can we do instead of enforcing a helmet policy? I ride a motorcycle and would never go without my helmet. How do we relay that it is unsafe without a policy?

Answer: Many states currently don't have laws for helmets- even for motorcycles - not to mention scooters or bicycles. However, there is research showing that States that have dropped their helmet laws have seen an increase in head injuries.

Question: (from Panel) Are there any scooter riders in the room?

Answer: No, there was one motorcycle rider and he always wears a helmet.

Comment: Scooters are treated like a toy, a toy for transportation. Many of the scooter riders on campus seem to have the perception that it is not dangerous to ride a scooter; especially without a helmet and other proper gear (footwear-shoes not flip flops). Scooters are seen as a convenient mode of transportation that can get you from one side of campus to the other quickly and without consequence-if you are lucky. A helmet is seen as inconvenient because you would then have to carry it with you or lock it to your scooter. The fact is that if a scooter rider is obeying ALL of the rules of the road a scooter isn't going to get them to class any faster (than walking).

Question: How many scooters are registered on campus?

Answer: Unsure of the exact number, but it is a growing number and has been on a steady increase for the past couple of years.

It was acknowledged that there are many problems with bicycles on campus as well; with riders putting themselves and others in bad situations because of ignorance and breaking the rules of the road. However, the number of scooters on campus continues to grow and because of those numbers the safety concerns grow and need to be addressed.

It was suggested that a special site be created for scooters to educate and inform the University's scooter riders of all the requirements needed for operating a scooter, as well as the consequences (points against the rider's driver's license etc.) There is a high probability that many of the campus' scooter riders are unaware of these consequences. A site like this could be tied into the registration process with DOTS, which could get the information to the public.

Question: What is the precedence of a policy like this? Are there other universities that have helmet laws/policies?

Answer: The committee has been checking with peer institutions and the results so far have been that no other universities have helmet policies, but the states do. For example, in California and Michigan it is

state law that scooter riders wear a helmet. In North Carolina you must be at least 16 years old to operate a scooter and on highways you must wear a helmet. Illinois does not have a helmet law. Several states do not distinguish between motorcycles and motor scooters; Maryland recognizes them as two different classifications of vehicle. The city of College Park could create a city ordinance requiring that scooter riders wear helmets within the city limits; just as the University can create a policy for on campus use of scooters.

Seeing that there were no further questions or comments Ferrick closed the open forum. All of the concerns raised at the forum would be further discussed at the next Campus Affairs Committee meeting on March 8, 2011. Due to the low attendance rate of the forum other methods of reaching out to the campus community for opinions on a helmet policy such as using the suggestion of a website will be explored.

Ferrick thanked the panel and all that were in attendance for coming and expressing their concerns for campus traffic safety.

The Campus Affairs Committee met on March 8, 2011 and discussed the minutes from the Safety Forum. Because of the low attendance to the forum it was decided that a simple webpage linked to the Campus Affairs Committee website (<http://www.senate.umd.edu/committees/campusaff/index.cfm>) would be created along with a dedicated email address (helmet@umd.edu), and a survey to gather further input and give members of the campus an outlet for expressing their concerns or questions about scooter safety and thoughts on a helmet policy. The Campus Affairs Committee plans to use all of the information gathered from the Safety Forum, survey, and email address to gain a comprehensive understanding of whether a helmet policy would be appropriate for our campus.