



**University Senate  
PROPOSAL FORM**

<b>Name:</b>	Eric Kasischke
<b>Date:</b>	August 27, 2010
<b>Title of Proposal:</b>	Proposal to Review Appropriate Motor Scooter Use on Campus
<b>Phone Number:</b>	X52179
<b>Email Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:ekasisch@umd.edu">ekasisch@umd.edu</a>
<b>Campus Address:</b>	1153 LeFrak Hall
<b>Unit/Department/College:</b>	Geography/BSOS
<b>Constituency (faculty, staff, undergraduate, graduate):</b>	Faculty
<b>Description of issue/concern/policy in question:</b>	<p>There has been an increasing use of sidewalks and pedestrian-only areas in the South Campus area over the past year by motor scooters. While Transportation Services is aware of this problem, the steps they have implemented to curb this use has been ineffective. One could argue that this ineffectiveness is due to a combination of factors. First, it is clear that insufficient resources are being brought to bear to enforce existing laws and University parking policies. Second, it may be that the existing policy on impounding of illegally parked motor scooters is too lenient. For both of these reasons, I would like to see this issue discussed by the Campus Transportation Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Now, some background behind my concerns:</p> <p>My office is located on the south side of LeFrak Hall, and overlooks the pedestrian plaza between LeFrak and the South Dining Hall. I use this pedestrian plaza frequently on my way to and from the parking lots as well as when I go to lunch.</p> <p>Over the past year, I have noticed an explosion in the use of this area by motor scooters. The increase in use stems from several sources. First, a number of students use scooters for visiting the South Dining Hall during meal hours, and they drive and park view driving and park as a matter of convenience. Second, some students use this area when attending classes in LeFrak. And third, some scooter drivers use the plaza as a shortcut when traveling across South Campus.</p>


I contacted the Transportation Services about this situation last fall, and they informed me that the use of the sidewalks and pedestrian plaza by motor scooters for parking was clearly against University policy and that driving in these areas was against the law and would result in a traffic citation if observed by a University police officer. The representative from Transportation Services informed me that they would increase patrolling of this area in order to reduce use by motor scooters.

In spite of this assurance, I noticed a continual increase in motor scooter use throughout the remainder of the fall term and into the beginning of the spring term. I again informed Transportation Services of my concerns in early March and they again responded that they were aware of the problem and that while steps were being taken to curb the use of this area by motor scooters, it would take time for these steps to become effective.

At this time, I began to systematically collect data to document the level of use of motor scooters in the pedestrian mall between LeFrak and the South Dining Hall (see attached report). I think these data show there was a continuing use of the observation area by motor scooters throughout March and April of 2010. Typically, between 7 am and 3 pm, I would see 20 to 25 motor scooters in this area, with the heaviest concentrations between 730 to 900 am (breakfast) and 11 to 1 (lunch). An analysis of the data I collected indicates that motor scooter use was actually increasing throughout this period.

One can only conclude that whatever steps were taken by Transportation Services were ineffective, at best. During this observation period, I did see University Police Officers parked in the area on several occasions, but they did not remain for more than 15-20 minutes. I also noticed that on several occasions, that employees from Transportation Services visited the area and issued warnings to illegally parked motor scooters. Again, these visits were for relatively short time periods and infrequent.

It is clear from the continued use of this area by motor scooters, especially around meal times, that motor scooter drivers either do not think there is anything wrong with their actions, or they realize that their actions have no negative consequences. Without any change in the status quo (e.g., ineffective enforcement), I predict that we will see an increase in motor scooter activity across the South Campus area in areas that are intended for pedestrian use only.

<p><b>Description of action/changes you would like to see implemented and why:</b></p>	<p>So, what can be done? I suggest three courses of action. First, Transportation Services should allocate resources needed to enforce existing traffic laws and parking rules. This means Transportation Services employees must have a continuous presence in this area and issue parking citations over a sufficient time period that they are allowed to impound illegally parked motor scooters. In addition, University Police should establish coordinated patrols throughout the area over a sufficiently long time period to be able to issue citations to a sufficient number of violators. Having them park in the Pedestrian Mall for 15-20 minutes at a time at infrequent intervals only advertises their presence, and does not provide a deterrence. Another step that could be taken is to change the policy regarding penalties for illegally parked motor scooters. Current policy calls for the issuance of three warnings to illegally parked motor scooters prior to impounding a scooter for repeated violations. This policy can only be effective if sufficient resources are provided to continuously monitor an area for parking violations. An alternate approach would be to lower the number of warnings. My recommendation is that a zero tolerance policy be adopted, e.g., impound any motor scooter that is illegally parked. This would provide a more viable tool for addressing this issue than the present approach.</p>
<p><b>Suggestions for how your proposal could be put into practice:</b></p>	<p>Review of the situation by the Campus Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC).</p>
<p><b>Additional Information:</b></p>	<p>Photo of the Motor scooter parking lot outside of the South Dining Hall at approximately 8 am. Note the six scooters in this photo are a typical number observed</p> 

## **Motor Scooter Observations in the South Campus Area**

For the purposes of this report, the study area is defined as the brick-covered pedestrian mall located between LeFrak Hall and the South Dining Hall. The observations were made between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., with the majority of the observations being made before 4 p.m. observations were collected on 32 different days between 5 March 2010 and 4 May 2010. The length of the observation periods was not constant, and ranged between 1 and 9 hours. Note that the study area was not continuously monitored throughout the day. Observations were only collected when the observer was present and saw scooters in the area from a window that had a partial view of the study area. Thus, the number of scooters in the study area is likely to be much higher than reported here.

Whenever possible, the University of Maryland Motor Scooter Registration Number was noted – when the scooter did not have Registration Number, other identifying features were noted (e.g., make and color of the scooter, license plate number, manufacturers serial number, unique stickers, etc.). For analyses purposes, the observations were divided into two periods: Period I (15 days): 4 March to 9 April 2010; and Period II (17 days): 12 April to 4 May 2010.

A total 75 different scooters have been observed in the study area over the entire study period, with 25% (19) being unregistered with the University of Maryland. During Period I, 55 different scooters were observed, and this number increased to 61 scooters during Period II.

There was a bimodal distribution in the number of scooters observed at different times of the day, with the highest concentration of use occurring during 7-9 a.m. (41% of the observations) and 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. (31% of the observations) (Figure 1). The use of the study area by scooters, however, was continuous throughout the day between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., with scooters being observed in every time period.

The average length of observation during the day was higher during Period II (5.6 hours) than Period I (4.7 hours), which partially accounts for the increase in the average number of scooters observed per day (12.1 during Period I and 16.1 during Period II). However, a statistical regression of the number of scooters observed as a function of the length of the daily observing period shows that the hourly rate of scooters observed per hour increased from 2.55 during Period I to 2.91 during Period II (Figure 2).