



## Parking problems on campus

Now that the summer is coming to a close and the trees are infinitesimally different shades of green and the chipmunks are scurrying this way and that outside of the Reed Building, this could only mean one thing: the students of Penn State Behrend are fighting for a parking spot.

The rumor around campus is that 1100 new students were admitted this year to join the tiny Behrend community so revelled by the administration and the students. The sheer size of the incoming class threatens to destroy that community. Everything is crowded, including housing, the sidewalks, and especially the parking lots.

At any point in the day, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., the lots are full. We can easily criticize the administration for its indiscriminate policy on issuing the parking permits, and yes, with the increased price or parking at Behrend, students could complain of a money grubbing administration. However, maybe the increased price of parking was determined as a means to discourage students from purchasing one. If that is the case, the administration has to be asked; what about the commuters?

Commuting students have no choice but to purchase a parking permit, mainly because Behrend is secluded and no other parking alternative is available, but also because of the, at best, mediocre public transportation system in Erie and the surrounding community.

Should Behrend adopt a new policy for the sale of parking permits and will this effect the price?

A majority of colleges exclude freshmen from eligibility for on campus parking and the exclusion of freshmen at Behrend would solve part of the problem. This sounds like a good idea, however we must remember that colleges with this policy also have a policy that requires freshmen to live on campus the first year. We all know that Behrend Housing could not handle such a load from a continual increase in students at Behrend. The figure show an increase of fifty percent in the last six years

and no sign of letting up. To exclude any commuter from purchasing a parking permit will cause unjust hardship. Students have enough to worry about in class without worrying about how they're getting to school in the morning.

Other policies could include more parking lots, but where? The only feasible, close place would be the athletic field. I don't think Behrend is ready to give up its sports.

A further increase in the price of parking will have no effect on parking because commuters, again, have no choice but to purchase one. Increasing prices again will only serve as a penalty for commuting to school.

So, the students are left in a pinch. The problem is that the school facilities are not growing at the same rate as the class sizes. Either entrance to Behrend must become more exclusive, raising its application standards, to hold back the tide of incoming students, or it must increase the facilities at a greater rate.

A peek into the budget, published by Penn State, shows planned increases at Behrend. The 96-97 budget has a new 30 million dollar Graduate Research Building planned for Behrend to benefit the Science Divisions. Plus the 97-98 budget plans call for a two million dollar maintenance building to house equipment and Police and Safety. Also, an amount of money has gone to rewiring the overburdened electrical system at Behrend. Hopefully, the power will stop cutting off every other night in the apartments.

There seems to be no relief in sight for parking. Next year, expect the situation to get worse.

All we can do is urge the administration to consider the growth of the campus in planning future construction that will keep up with student needs. A second possibility is coming early for classes because you may have to walk a few minutes to get there.

--Chad Clouse  
Collegian Staff  
*\*yes, he is a commuter*

## Long-Distance Relationships Can you make 'em work?

Q: "This past summer I met someone who I really like. But when we finally started getting close, I had to go away to school. Now I'm not sure if we established our relationship enough for it to withstand the distance."

A: The only thing you needed to establish with each other before going away to school is whether you want to give this relationship a chance to grow.

Will it? There's no way to know what will happen. Distance can be a minor annoyance, a major barrier or a kiss of death. But it also can give you important room to grow and cause you to appreciate each other even more.

Physical closeness doesn't guarantee intimacy. There are plenty of people who see each other every day, even live together, who feel lonely and miserable in their relationships. Recently a student told me that friends of his were able to maintain a long-distance relationship for five years. After all that time, they were finally able to move in together. Six months later, "they were history," he said. If two people want a relationship, it can grow stronger--no matter how far away they are from each other. If only one person wants it, it's not a relationship.

Distance doesn't have to prevent you from learning about each other and going forward in your relationship. Letters, cards and telephone calls can keep you in active communication. You can send fun items in the mail and make each other tapes. Be careful not to measure how your relationship is going by how many letters you get. Some people aren't letter writers. And some are uncomfortable (and monosyllabic) on the telephone no matter how many hours you talk together when you're with each other in person.

What you first need to determine is if this person is worth it to you. As much as you'd both like this relationship to grow, a key issue is how you feel about being in a long-distance relationship.

Lynn, a senior, explained: "The big issue for me would be whether or not it would be worth risking getting hurt or risking that it would work out. I've never been able to date more than one person at a time. So I'd be putting my life on hold to take a chance on whether he would work out."

Stephen, a junior, said, "Can't you just chill out and follow your nose? After a couple of weeks, you'll know if you want it or not. So just don't get ahead of yourself about commitment and see where it goes."

Keith, a senior, told me: "I think you shouldn't write the relationship off, but you also shouldn't have such strict rules that you're going to feel guilty and limited. The more rules you have, the more you open the door for resentment and temptation. It's really hard to do, but you've got to trust that things will work out the way they're supposed to."

If you think the long-distance person is worth it, go for it. If you don't try, you'll never know. If you just take a day at a time and see what happens, at least you'll be giving it a chance.

--Ellen Rosenberg  
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Ellen Rosenberg is college educator and the creator of Life 101 Campus programs. The questions and responses from students are from real-life situations. Have a problem that you'd like Rosenberg to help you with? Write her at: c/o Real Life on Campus, College Press Service, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60611. Or e-mail a question to cpsnet@aol.com.