

campus life

Parking permits now required on Wharton Ave.

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A new law in Middletown has left off-campus parking limited for students without a permit. Effective since June 9, 2009, ordinance #1253 has made it illegal for any car without a bright orange pass to park along the residential streets that neighbor campus. However, signs that state this new law were not posted until three weeks into the beginning of the semester.

I, like many other students who utilized the side streets and walked onto campus, was surprised. This solution was much easier to do than shell out the \$75 it costs to get a pass to park in the school's lots. Now, I know some of you are thinking that this is not very expensive at all. But, if you calculate in the cost of books, rent, food, and just about every other college fee, the expenditures begin to add up. When the permit signs went up, I decided it was time to find out why.

My first thought was to ask the campus police. Perhaps they had the answer that I was looking for. Unfortunately, they did not. They did, however, point me in the direction of the Middletown borough. Upon arrival at the Middletown offices, I found out that the acting borough manager Cindy Foster was not in. Luckily, her secretary was nice enough to print a copy of Ordinance #1253 out for me.

After reading over the document some light was shed on the law that I did not know prior to investigation.

The community that borders campus (referred to as the Grandview Neighborhood) had a number of residents complaining about students taking their parking spaces during school. Therefore, meetings were held in order to layout a new parking scheme for students. Representatives from Penn State Harrisburg were also in attendance for these meetings. The verdict was finally reached when the community and

PSH agreed on a fair and legally enforceable plan.

The houses that make up the Grandview Neighborhood were all issued three parking passes per house. These permits entitle the holder to park on the marked streets without any consequence. If someone without a permit parks in the 'permit only' zone, they can receive a citation. The extent of the ordinance still did not answer some of my questions. What if the homeowner has more than three cars? What if visitors come over and there are not enough passes for their car? Is this new law permanent during the summer?

So I hit the streets to find some opinions on the new decree. First, I asked a resident who is affected by the situation. John Hertzler, an elderly man, told me that he was not too affected. "I live on the corner so I have plenty of parking," Hertzler stated. "My only question is will it still be effective during the school's breaks?"

It turns out that I was not the only one with questions for the borough. Sophomore Cody Pennington had a different view on the situation. "I think it is a complete outrage. College students need all of the assistance they can get financially and this is a classic act of extortion."

Ordinance #1253 has definitely stirred things up on campus. Now, less parking is available on a campus that already has overflowing lots. Taking these residential spots away from the student's selection has caused Wharton Ave. to become a complete parallel parking pandemic.



Photo by JENNA DENOYELLES/ The Capital Times

Students who park along Wharton Ave. must now display parking permits.

Prof. spot: Dr. Clemmie E. Gilpin

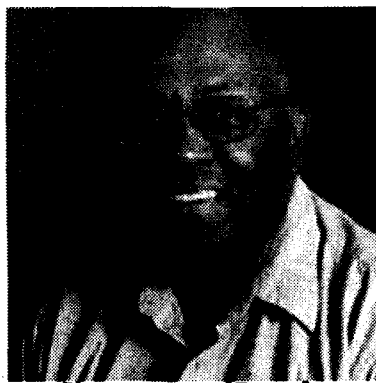


Photo courtesy of Psu.edu

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Dr. Clemmie E. Gilpin is an assistant professor of Community Systems and Afro-American Studies. He started teaching at Penn State Harrisburg in 1971, as a faculty member. Before starting at the PSH he taught for a year and a half at an Agricultural Internment Center as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nigeria.

"Since I retired a year ago, I teach two courses," he said. Presently in the summer he teaches a course called Social Conflicts and in the fall he teaches a course called Geography on International Affairs. "Working in a university you have to teach courses in which you have some experience," he said.

Dr. Gilpin said he has a keen interest in international politics, in inter group relationships, and in ways which governments cooperate and interlink. The two courses he teaches give him a chance to relate to these topics.

Although he has retired a year ago he had decided to teach at PSH. He did not want to travel when he retired. Though he has traveled to many places, he said he does not like to travel, and that he wants to do something with his time.

As an undergraduate student of Dr. Gilpin, Ben Branstetter, Layout Editor for The Capital Times, is currently enrolled in Dr. Gilpin's Geography and International Affairs course.

"I feel like I have taken this course before, but he keeps it very entertaining. "He is very freestyle in his teaching, he likes to use humor, and question people, and keep them involved," said Branstetter.

Although Dr. Gilpin enjoys teaching International Affairs, he said that he really did not set out to teach.

"I think if I were to look at the transformation of my career goals, it went from Architecture in high school to undecided in undergraduate school to a history major. I had no desire to teach history at a high school level," he said.

He became really interested in international issues because of his dad. His father was his influence. As far as motivation, he thinks it is something that comes internally.

"The fact that my dad was an avid newspaper reader... I knew that it was important to him, and I found that it would be something I would be interested in," said Dr. Gilpin. "And so I became an avid newspaper reader and became involved in issues that were happening in other countries."

Before coming to Pennsylvania Dr. Gilpin worked for VISTA, Volunteer in Service to America, part of the AmeriCorps program, which he did for six to seven months before joining the Peace Corps and going for his Masters

Degree program.

"Joining the Peace Corps was one of the best decisions I made in my life..." he said. He said the fact that I am able to live in different cultures, and interact and meet different people is an amazing experience, also meeting Americans from all over the country. "I think this was a great experience for me," said Dr. Gilpin.

Dr. Gilpin said the three main experiences from any countries that he has seen was getting to know people, getting to know the major culture, and the cuisines. Each culture is center around eating.

"That is how you get to know and experience different cultures," he said.

"To people who are interested in joining the Peace Corps I say think about it... give it a lot of thought. It is not for everyone, it requires a commitment and I think it could eventually become one of the best jobs you ever loved," he said.

"I think you literally bring that position back home with you. In reality one of the goals in the Peace Corps is not what people bring back to the field, but what people bring back home," he said.

Dr. Gilpin said that the term for returned Peace Corps Volunteer used to be Ex-Peace Corps Volunteers, and that term was used for the longest time.

"The assumption," he said, "is that the place you served in the world... many of us have some type of engagement with countries we serve in..."

Right now Dr. Gilpin is not thinking of stopping his teaching career at Penn State Harrisburg and he does not would not want to travel on a full time bases, as much as he like to experience new cultures.