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## NKU feels parking angst

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Northern Kentucky University's new buildings mean fewer places to park - at least according to many students.

"It is a concern because NKU is limited with the amount of land it has and NKU's attempt to create new facilities is taking the place of some parking spots," said Kelly Sirk, vice president of the student government association.

Kenneth Ramey, NKU's vice president for administration and finance, said the problem is more perception than fact.

"We have approximately 10,500 permits issued to students and 6,762 spaces available at this time, of which approximately 5,000 are designated as open or student lots," Ramey said.

"Contrary to popular belief, we have available parking at any time during the day. It may not be the most convenient parking, but with the exception of the first three to four weeks of fall classes, there is always ample parking," he said.

Students beg to differ.

"Mainly the problems students are having with parking is the heavy traffic flow going into campus and what they feel are 'not enough parking spaces,' " said Sirk. "I have heard from students that they do not like putting up new buildings because they feel it takes away parking spaces."

Sirk said the parking problem is most apparent between 9 and 11 a.m.

But according to Sirk, NKU, working with student government, is addressing the issue.

"This summer NKU repaved a parking lot and relined it providing 500 more spots," said Sirk. "Also, SGA has addressed the issue of signage on campus. Some students were confused on which lots they could park in, so new signs have been put up to specify. Removing a crosswalk across from the science center eliminated traffic congestion in that area."

Ramey noted that NKU offered a shuttle during the first few weeks of that busy fall term and also reached an agreement to provide free TANK service to anyone with a valid NKU identification card.

"This has been well received," he said. "We have seen an increase in ridership from 6,266 rides in August to 11,587 rides in October."

Ramey said NKU is also addressing future parking issues on campus.

"We will open a new garage and surface lot by fall of '08 that will provide an additional 1,370 spaces. In addition, we are reviewing our entire parking program at this time and anticipate additional options for our students next fall."

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