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## N E W S

## Students struggle to find parking spaces on campus

By **Thad Komorowski** Contributing Writer | September 24th, 2009

At 8:30 a.m. on a Tuesday, junior Elise Friello was looking for a parking space. Friello had just finished field hockey practice and was driving back to her dorm in Terrace 1 before her 9 a.m. class. But after 45 minutes of driving around, Friello said she had no luck finding parking.

"I tried the Towers' parking lot — nothing," she said. "I went to the Terraces, and nothing there. The closest spot was all the way in the Circles."

Friello said she decided to park in a blue lot near the Towers, reserved for faculty and staff. When she went to move her car four hours later, she had a \$20 parking ticket.

Construction on the Athletics and Events Center and the presence of Terrace 13 taking up the back end of the Terrace parking lot have made it more difficult for students to find convenient parking spaces on campus.

"I never had problems like these last year," Friello said.

For first-year students, parking passes are \$500, compared to \$220 for the 2008-09 school year. Laura Durling, assistant director of administrative services in the department of Public Safety, said first-year passes are significantly higher this year because of the increased enrollment.

Because of the large freshman class, there is now a limit of 200 parking passes for first-year students, Durling said. Currently there are about 150 cars registered to freshmen on campus. Last year, there was no cap on first-year passes, and 225 freshmen registered their cars on campus.

"It was an administrative decision to limit the number to 200 ... to discourage new students from bringing vehicles and to allow more spaces for staff, faculty and upperclassmen," Durling said.

First-year parking is restricted to the Z Lot, near Emerson Hall.

Freshman Bobby Koch brought a car to the college because he said he thought it would make getting around Ithaca easier. He said he now regrets paying for a parking pass.

"The cost is too high, especially since they're making the freshmen park so far away," he said.

At the beginning of the academic year, approximately 3,475 permits — 2,275 students and 1,200 faculty and staff — have been issued. Durling said this number is about the same as last year.

"We expect to have 5,000 permits issued by the end of the academic year," Durling said.

Sophomore Phong Lao said he thinks the construction on campus has resulted in fewer parking spaces in the Quads and Terraces than in previous years.

"There was a lot more spaces before all of the work started," Lao said.

Terri Stewart, director of Public Safety, said arrangements were made to accommodate spaces lost because of the construction.

"We mapped this all out before construction started to be certain there would be no issues," Stewart said. "According to our records, the ratio of parking spaces to cars is


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Freshman Nate Crider unpacks his car Friday afternoon in the Terrace parking lot. First-year students pay \$500 for a parking pass and park in Z Lot, near Emerson Hall. Last year, freshmen paid \$220 for a parking pass.

JOSE EDUARDO MAGUEY BARRERA/THE ITHACAN

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sufficient.”

Stewart said there is now a temporary M Lot to make up for the lost spaces near the A&E Center. She also said I Lot in the Terraces was extended to the athletic circle — making the number of parking spots the same as last year.

Sophomore Doreen French, a first-year transfer student who lives off campus, said her previous two colleges didn’t charge to park at all.

“Ithaca is the first one I’ve had to pay to park at,” French said. “For what I pay, I should be able to park a lot closer and not have to spend 20 minutes searching for a space. One should be waiting for me.”

Stewart said complaints of the spaces not being close enough are the only ones her department receives.

“Otherwise, we get hardly any complaints at all,” Stewart said.

Public Safety has also been trying to rectify the situation by encouraging increased use of local transportation services.

“We want to deter heavy traffic in the immediate area,” Stewart said, “So we have also been campaigning increased ridership among TCAT and Ithaca Carshare and have been very successful on that count. We also encourage bicycling in the spring and fall as a great way to travel.”

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