

Warped

by Scott McCullar



Shuttle bus

New policies to go in effect next semester

By ABBY L. LECOCQ
Reporter

Beginning next semester, anyone who rides the shuttle bus to or from campus will need either a bus pass or one-ride coupon for each ride, says Bill Conaway, assistant manager of Bus Operations.

There have been some problems and confusion in the past over who can and cannot ride the bus, so Bus Operations has adopted a policy to eliminate those problems, Conaway says.

Under the current policy if a student without a bus pass is off campus and needs a ride to campus, he is required to call the dispatcher and give the reason for needing a ride, Conaway says. The dispatcher then calls the buses on the route and informs the drivers that a certain student will be riding without a pass.

If the student is on campus and has lost his pass, he is required to go to the Coke Building and purchase a one-ride coupon for 75 cents, Conaway says.

But Conaway says they are getting stamped by calls. As many as 10 calls a day are received at Bus Operations, so next semester these policies will change, he says.

"Calling in to the dispatcher or filling in here in order to ride the bus will be null and void," Conaway says.

Also the rider will be required to have a bus pass or a one-ride coupon ride either to or from campus.

"That's the bottom line," he says. "Whether they've lost their pass or

had it stolen, the new rules will apply.

"A fee slip and a driver's license won't do," Conaway says.

Conaway says they are recommending that students buy a coupon book for emergency purposes. Coupon books at \$5 for 10 coupons can be purchased at the Coke Building.

He suggested that roommates purchase one book to keep at their house or apartment in case of an emergency.

"This will eliminate some of the confusion for the drivers about who

There have been some problems and confusion in the past over who can and cannot ride the bus, so Bus Operations has adopted a policy to eliminate those problems.

Bill Conaway, assistant manager of Bus Operations

can and cannot ride to campus," Conaway says. "It's just to keep everything running smoothly. And... it's fair because everyone who uses it pays for it."

He says this new policy will probably make some students mad, but that this is a policy students are used to.

"You can't go to an athletic event without a student I.D.," he says. "You can't get into DeWare Field

House or the Read Building without an I.D. You can't cash a check at the MSC without a student I.D."

In the past, drivers have taken it upon themselves to let students ride without a pass, Conaway says.

But it is part of the driver's job to check passes and it is the student's responsibility to show that pass or have a coupon to ride the bus, he says.

If a student loses his bus pass, which is now a sticker on the student I.D. card, a new I.D. can be made at the Pavilion for \$9, Conaway says.

After the student picks up his new I.D. card, he needs to take it to Bus Operations where the bus pass will be replaced at no cost.

Conaway says that in the past students had to pay for a new bus pass.

This new policy was not developed to punish students, it was developed to prevent the marginal students from taking advantage of the system, Conaway says.

Doug Williams, manager of Bus Operations, says, "The problem with a service like this is nobody misses it or appreciates it until they can't get it. So we're giving them plenty of warning."

Conaway says that the new policy, developed by Williams, already has been approved by the Physical Plant.

The Park and Ride service does not require a bus pass to ride. However, it was designed to transport students and faculty from the west campus parking lots to central campus, Conaway says. It was not designed to be an inner-campus shuttle.

Congress backs space business

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Businessmen who want to go into outer space were told Wednesday that Congress can give them a boost with tax and insurance incentives, rather than grants from NASA, which faces budget cuts.

At a Capitol Hill breakfast hosted by Rep. Mike Andrews, D-Houston, and members of the Texas congressional delegation, representatives of private space ventures and Texas business organizations, there was talk of diversifying the Texas economy.

While the business of drilling beneath the earth levels off, industry aimed at the heavens is ready to take flight, the businessmen said.

"We want you to know we're here, that we can support this space commercialization and we're dedicated to do it," said David Hannah of Space Services of America, a private launch enterprise based in Houston.

A joint public-private push is "absolutely essential to get this industry off the ground," said Robert New, a Texas Commerce Bank executive representing the Houston Economic Development Council.

But Andrews said the space entrepreneurs should not expect to rely on grants from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

"I think there's no question that people are willing to make the kind of budget cuts that are necessary on the NASA budget," said Andrews. "The real question is how visionary can we be in some of the other incentives to help commercialization."

That will affect what some of these companies are able to do much more than the NASA budget for '86 or '87 or even till the end of the decade," he said.

He said the House is set to consider ways to back insurance for the companies — space insurance is hard to get and expensive — and tax incentives for production of goods in outer space.

Robert Pace of Microgravity Research Associates of Houston said his company wants to go into space to grow special crystals, "sort of like silicon." The crystals will not grow correctly on Earth because of gravity.

Houston businessman Jack Rains, representing the city's chamber of commerce, said "reports of our (economic) death are greatly exaggerated."

But, he said, the oil, gas and petrochemical industries do not promise to create any new jobs. Space commercialization is one of the most promising new industries in the area, he said.

"We don't look for government subsidies, we look for government creating the environment so the private sector can work, because government truly controls the environment in space commercialization," Rains said.

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