

Faculty Senate Resolution Regarding Campus Parking

The Tennessee Tech University Faculty Senate wishes to express serious concern regarding the current campus parking situation and its impact on students, faculty, and staff. Reports indicate that members of the campus community are experiencing significant difficulty locating legal parking, even when arriving well before scheduled classes and work obligations. Students have reported arriving late to or missing class because parking could not be found, while students and employees have expressed concerns regarding citations, safety, and access to campus facilities.

Specific points of contention are the following:

1. Construction on campus.

Construction on campus has seriously reduced the number of available spaces. While we are aware that new buildings will take the place of areas that were for parking, there seems to be a lack of attention paid to the effect this undertaking has on the parking situation. Indeed, moving parking areas to the fringe of campus has been a stated priority.

2. Spaces for Facilities vehicles.

The number of available spaces for Tech faculty, students, and staff has been reduced by the practice of designating spaces for Facilities vehicles. Quite often these spaces are empty, except when occupied by a car that parks there illegally out of desperation.

3. Resurfacing of parking lots.

Resurfacing of parking lots frequently yields a reduction in number of spaces. For example, the parking lot behind the library has fewer spaces than before because of wider aisles. For this reason, many people are parking in places that are not designated spaces, and receiving tickets as a result. It worsens the problem, but, of course, makes more money for the University.

4. The creation of "RESERVED" parking spaces in various parking lots on campus.

This matter did not come before the Administrative Council, which has always been the body that dealt with parking on campus. It is a serious departure from the concept of shared governance, bypassing those traditionally tasked with considering such matters. It worsens the problem, but, of course, makes more money for the University.

The creation of the reserved spaces creates tiers within the faculty/staff. We have one group that fights to obtain a decent parking space, even if they arrive well before the start of the work day, while another group has the option to show up later in the day and still be able to park close to where they work. This is terrible for morale, and especially for those who get here before 8 (maybe as early as 7:30) and drive past numerous open (reserved) spaces before heading over across Willow Ave. to perhaps park in the far back reaches of that lot.

The new practice of charging students for parking regardless of whether they bring a car on campus only aggravates the situation, because some students will decide that as long as they are paying for parking, they might as well use it. It worsens the problem, but, of course, makes more money for the University.

Faculty Senate Requests

Recognizing that parking directly affects campus accessibility, academic participation, employee responsibilities, and the overall functioning of the University, the Faculty Senate respectfully requests that Tennessee Tech University:

1. **Provide verified parking**, including the current number and allocation of general, usage, employee, reserved, visitor, accessible, and other restricted spaces, along with relevant permit and transportation-fee data and shuttle usage data.
2. **Assess actual parking utilization** by location, user group, day, and time, including residential and employee parking, to determine whether current challenges reflect overall capacity, allocation, location, or a combination of these factors.
3. **Identify immediate mitigation strategies** for construction and peak-demand periods. Potential considerations include temporary or overflow parking, commuter-focused options, shuttle and park-and-ride accessibility, timely communication regarding lot closures and high-demand events, clearly identified legal overflow parking, and appropriate coordination of parking enforcement.
4. **Develop and communicate a comprehensive long-term parking and transportation plan** that considers projected enrollment, commuter patterns, residential growth, accessibility, construction, future campus development, and the timing of additional parking infrastructure.
5. **Ensure meaningful shared governance** by consulting appropriate representative bodies and affected students, faculty, and staff before implementing future substantive changes to parking policy, fees, zoning, or allocation.

The Faculty Senate recognizes that no single action will resolve all campus parking concerns. However, the experiences reported by students, faculty, and staff, together with the preliminary analysis of parking demand, indicate that a comprehensive, data-informed review is warranted.

The accompanying Student Parking Concerns Summary and Campus Parking Demand Analysis are provided as supporting documentation. Together, these materials document the reported effects of current parking conditions and provide a preliminary quantitative framework for evaluating parking capacity and identifying additional institutional data needed for decision-making.

Therefore, the Faculty Senate respectfully requests that the University work collaboratively with appropriate campus constituencies to identify immediate measures to improve current parking conditions while developing a transparent, data-informed, and sustainable long-term approach to campus parking and transportation. Timely, widespread communication and accurate parking maps are essential as we move forward.

Passed Faculty Senate on September 14, 2026