

Flexible bus hours needed

Written by The Vidette Editorial Board
Tuesday, 22 January 2013 12:30

Universities all over the United States are taking action when it comes to keeping their student population safe. Safety has become a huge concern for schools in recent years due to increased incidents of violence. Public health and safety should be the priority of university presidents, and it's good to see new precautions are being taken to prevent unnecessary tragedies from taking place.

Aside from the obvious classroom safety procedures being discussed, universities also have the obligation to protect their students around campus. One way that nearly all universities could improve upon is transportation. While ISU offers free public transportation to any student who presents his/her ID to the bus driver, that is not enough.

The bus system used by most students here at ISU is the Bloomington–Normal public transportation system, which is not limited to students. Places such as Walmart and Eastland Mall are easily accessible for students without any other means of transportation (granted, students definitely sacrifice time when taking the bus because of the numerous stops in between destinations). But the bus can be difficult to access when students are busy for the majority of the week.

ISU's NiteRide offers late transportation for students seven days a week. The NiteRide begins at 7 p.m. and stops operating at 1 a.m.

If safety is such a concern, there should be buses operating 24 hours a day and seven days a week.

ISU has utilized programs to ensure the health and safety of its students. For example, we receive text messages whenever there is a danger present on or near campus. Some of these techniques succeed without question.

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But the buses should be fixed.

Walking around campus late at night can present numerous dangers. With all of the headlines in the news consisting of violence in school areas, one can be incredibly reluctant trekking across campus. But if that student has no choice, they run the risk of encountering unsupervised areas that are perfect for something bad to happen.

A 24-hour bus system can provide some security for these people.

Realistically, being in a college environment, students are going to stay out late, whether they are cramming for an upcoming test or drinking at a local house party. There is a Late NiteRide bus that is offered until 2:30 in the morning, but drunken college students tend to stay out until 4 or even 5 a.m. If buses were available to students 24 hours a day, students might second-guess walking through the unsupervised Quad or, even worse, get behind the wheel of a car.

Another concern is the weather. We have had a relatively calm winter so far this year, but late January and early February usually possess some of the coldest days of the calendar year.

Students should not have to cross campus in the early hours of the morning when it is dangerously cold outside.

The university might claim that money is the primary reason buses do not run as late as they should. But if money was an issue, why does the Late NiteRide run until 2:30 a.m.? We have buses operating seven days a week on this campus; does it really cost that much more extra money to run buses in the early hours of the morning?

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This university is prospering in almost every aspect. It is hard to believe that extending the hours of the Late NiteRide bus route would affect ISU's budget so negatively; The Editorial Board believes the pros outweigh the cons regarding safety measures.

With all the new policies ISU has introduced trying to protect students, it becomes obvious that this institution cares about them. Twenty-four hour public transportation should be the next step to guarantee that students experience a safe environment here at this university.