

Brief Summary of “Referendum” Questions and Answers

In the Spring of 2006, the Transportation-focused Generic Environmental Impact Statement (T-GEIS) team conducted a survey of Cornell University faculty, staff, and students. The team and its consultants designed most of the survey. However, certain questions were written in cooperation with members of the University’s governance system. These so-called “referendum” questions were developed to satisfy one of the points in the agreement signed with the group protesting the construction of the University Avenue parking lot.

The survey was sent to random samplings from each undergraduate class. All graduate and professional students, at the request of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GPSA), were surveyed. The response rates were very high:

	Initial Population	Initial Sample	Completed Surveys	Response Rate
Graduate/Prof. Students	5,647	5,647	2,797	49.53%

	Initial Population	Initial Sample	Completed Surveys	Response Rate
Freshmen	3,112	1,400	495	35.35%
Sophomores	3,283	1,400	513	36.64%
Juniors	3,463	1,400	541	38.64%
Seniors	3,616	1,400	458	32.71%
TOTAL	13,474	5,600	2,007	35.84%

The survey has been exhaustively analyzed and reported upon by the Survey Research Institute (SRI) at Cornell University. The work of these survey experts and statisticians—as relates to the “referendum” questions—is summarized briefly in this document.

Question 30

What would be required for you to give up (not renew) your parking permit? Please rank up to three (3) incentives.

- Graduate/Professional Students: Top 3 responses were: "Free transit pass", "Better transit service", and "Books of 1-day parking passes for free or a reduced rate".
- Undergraduate Students: Top 3 responses were "Free transit pass", "Books of 1-day parking passes for free or a reduced rate", and "Better transit service".

Question 32

One way to reduce vehicle traffic on the campus is to institute a "park and lock" policy for the parking lots. That is, for a certain period of the day you can come and go once but are not allowed to re-enter the lot until after the restricted period has passed. Would you support such a policy?

- Graduate/Professional Students: Except for those respondents who walk, run, or bicycle, the majority of respondents for each mode of transportation replied "no" to supporting a park and lock policy.
- Undergraduate Students: Except for those respondents who walk, run, or bicycle, the majority of respondents for each mode of transportation replied "no" to supporting a park and lock policy.

Question 33

One way to reduce vehicle traffic on the campus is to institute a "one permit, one zone" policy where your parking permit allows you to park in the designated zone but nowhere else. Would you support such a policy?

- Graduate/Professional Students: Over two out of five graduates reported "No" when asked if they support a "one permit, one zone" policy. Over a quarter of graduates reported "Yes, but only if zones are small enough that I'm sure to get a spot in my permitted lot."
- Undergraduate Students: Not Asked

Question 34

One way to reduce the number of trips made by car to and around campus is to restrict the availability of parking permits. (Accommodations would be made for those with no other option, including those with physical disabilities or without access to other modes.)

Restrictions for first year undergraduates

- Graduate/Professional Students: Most graduate/professional students believe that first year undergraduates should not be allowed parking permits, with the second largest group feeling that parking permits should be only allowed if living greater than five miles from campus.
- Undergraduate Students: About two out of five undergraduates believe that first year undergraduates should not be allowed parking permits, while about one-third believe there should be no restrictions set. Approximately one out of ten believe parking permits should be only allowed if living more than five miles from campus.

Restrictions for sophomores

- Graduate/Professional Students: A plurality of respondents believe that parking permits should not be issued to sophomores, while another sizable portion believe that parking permits should only be issued for those who live more than 5 miles from campus.
- Undergraduate Students: The largest percentage of the respondents felt there should be no restrictions placed on parking permits for sophomores. Approximately one in seven respondents reported that parking permit should only be issued to those sophomores who live over five miles from campus.

Restrictions for juniors

- Graduate/Professional Students: A plurality of respondents felt that parking permits should only be issued to juniors who live more than five miles from campus. A sizable portion of graduate respondents also believe that parking permits should only be issued to those juniors who live over two miles from campus.
- Undergraduate Students: The majority of undergraduates believe there should be no restrictions on parking permits for juniors.

Restrictions for seniors

- Graduate/Professional Students: The plurality of graduate/professional students believed that seniors should have no restrictions on their parking permits. Nearly a quarter of respondents replied that seniors should only be allowed to have parking permits if they live more than five miles away from campus.
- Undergraduate Students: The overwhelming majority of undergraduates (65.33%) believe that seniors should have no restrictions on their parking permits.

Restrictions for graduate and professional students

- Graduate/Professional Students: The overwhelming majority of graduate/professional students believe there should be no restrictions on graduate/professional students parking permits.
- Undergraduate Students: The overwhelming majority of undergraduates believe that graduate/professional students should have no restrictions on their parking permits.

Restrictions for faculty and staff

- Graduate/Professional Students: From graduate and professional student population questioned, the overwhelming response was that there is to be no restriction on the availability of parking permits for faculty and staff members.
- Undergraduate Students: Approximately four out of five first year students, sophomores, juniors, and fifth year students believe no restrictions should be placed on parking availability for faculty and staff. More than seven out of ten seniors believed no restrictions should be placed on faculty and staff.

Question 35

As the university grows and as parking lots are taken up for buildings, the university will need to consider how, if at all, to change the current parking supply. Do you think the overall ratio of parking spaces per member of the campus community (students & employees) is:

- Graduate/Professional Students: The large majority of graduate/professional students feel the ratio of parking spaces to the Cornell community is too low. A bit less than one-third believe the ratio is "About Right."
- Undergraduate Students: The overwhelming majority of undergraduate students feel that the ratio of parking spaces per member of the Cornell community (students and employees) is on the low side. Only about one-fifth believe the ratio is "About Right".

Question 36

When the university looks to replace or build new parking spaces on campus, where and how should it build them?

- Graduate/Professional Students: The preferences of the graduate/professional students were evenly split, with almost half of the graduate/professional students questioned replying that the new parking spaces should be "Incorporated with new buildings where feasible and appropriate" and approximately another half feeling that parking spaces should be in a "New garage on existing surface spaces."
- Undergraduate Students: The preferences of the undergraduates were split primarily in two, with almost half believing that new parking spaces should be "Incorporated with new buildings where feasible and appropriate" and most of the remaining students feeling that parking spaces should be in a "New garage on existing surface spaces."

Question 37

Geographically, where should the university try to site new parking lots and/or garages

- Graduate/Professional Students: A plurality of graduate/professional students questioned believes that the new parking spaces should be put on the periphery of campus. Central campus was cited as the second most popular place to potentially put new parking.
- Undergraduate Students: Most undergraduates reported that the new parking spaces should be put in Central Campus or on the periphery of campus, with increased shuttle bus service to the center of campus.

Question 38

The average total cost to operate and maintain a parking space on campus exceeds \$1000 per year, significantly more than the cost of a parking permit. If the university were to charge the average total cost for parking, would you purchase a parking permit?

- Graduate/Professional Students: The overwhelming majority of graduate/professional students does not currently have a permit and would not purchase one at the average cost.
- Undergraduate Students: The overwhelming majority of undergraduates reported that they do not currently have a permit and would not purchase one at the average cost.

Question 39

The university currently subsidizes the cost of a parking permit. The following table lists ways this subsidy might be changed for students, faculty, and staff. Please check the box if you agree that the statement should apply to that group.

- Graduate/Professional Students: The majority of graduates reported that the parking subsidy should be decreased for undergraduates. For graduates, faculty, and staff approximately half of all graduate/professional students reported that the parking subsidy should remain unchanged.
- Undergraduate Students: Slightly over a third of undergraduates responded, "The parking subsidy should remain unchanged" when asked about potential changes in the subsidy for undergraduates. However, almost as many believed that the parking subsidy should be increased. Over half of all undergraduates believed the subsidy should remain unchanged for graduates, faculty, and staff.

Question 40

One suggestion by the community is the provision of bus passes to new students (first year undergrad, grad and transfers). Please select the statement you agree with and please select the group to which you belong.

- Graduate/Professional Students: Except for vet school students, the most popular option for graduate/professional students was "New students should get a free bus pass subsidized by an increase in student tuition or fees for first-year students only." The most popular option for vet students was "I do not feel that new students should get free bus passes." The least popular option for all graduate/professional students was "New students should get a free bus pass subsidized by general funds."
- Undergraduate Students: For undergraduate students overall, the most popular option was "I do not feel that new students should get free bus passes." The second most popular option overall was "New students should get a free bus pass subsidized by an increase in student tuition or fees for first-year students only."

Question 41

If new students are given free bus passes, should they be given only to those who do not purchase a parking permit?

- Graduate/Professional Students: Over two thirds of graduates believed free bus passes, if given to new students, should only be given to those who do not purchase a parking permit.
- Undergraduate Students: Over two thirds of undergraduates believed free bus passes, if given to new students, should only be given to those who do not purchase a parking permit.

Question 43

Hybrid buses produce fewer emissions and consume less fuel but can cost up to twice as much as a regular bus. How do you feel about the tradeoff between hybrid buses and regular buses when TCAT needs to replace its buses in the future? I feel that TCAT should buy:

- Graduate/Professional Students: Over two out of five graduates feel TCAT should buy hybrid buses even if it means they have higher costs. The next most frequently cited response was "I feel TCAT should buy regular buses in order to keep my out-of-pocket expenses from rising and/or service levels from falling."
- Undergraduate Students: Over one third of undergraduates believe TCAT should buy hybrid buses even if it means that they have higher costs. Approximately one fifth of undergraduates believe that TCAT should buy hybrid buses even if it means that they have higher costs and/or reduced service.