

SGA update regarding the University transit system
July 24, 2020

This upcoming fall semester, there will be many changes on our campus. These changes include alterations to the University transit system. These alterations will include changes to stops on routes, the name of routes, the maximum capacity on buses, and other operational differences. The Student Government Association has been working diligently with Transportation and Parking Services to ensure that students have the adequate information to succeed when they arrive on campus this fall.

To ensure the safety of all passengers by keeping crowding to a minimum, Transportation and Parking Services is following guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regarding reduced occupancy on buses (ex. 18-20 people per bus). The number of riders on a bus is subject to change based on the ongoing pandemic and new guidelines presented from the CDC and FTA. When entering a bus, you will see that some seats will be marked as unavailable. As of right now, standing on the buses is not allowed. If an open seat is not available, please wait and board the next bus. In addition to these operational changes, passengers are only allowed to enter and exit through the back door of the bus. There will be hand sanitizer on the buses by the back door that all passengers will be asked to use. Masks will also be required at all times on UGA buses.

Transportation and Parking Services have been in communication with the Student Government Association (SGA) in regard to changing routes across campus for this upcoming school year. SGA conducted a survey earlier this summer and received over 1,300 responses from students. After reviewing these responses, we recommended changes to certain routes, and Transportation and Parking Services listened to these recommendations and made the alterations accordingly. There is no doubt that changes to any route will be an adjustment for all students who have become accustomed to the usual routes on campus, but changes will be clearly and directly communicated with students both through SGA townhalls and the UGA app. Please note you may need to update the UGA app once routes are in effect to see changes. Many of the route changes focused on eliminating redundancies to allow more transit support in areas with higher demand as well as shortening routes to ensure buses service campus more quickly and frequently. Shortening the routes will help offset reduced occupancy on buses. Before these changes, some routes would take an hour to visit every stop and were spaced out to service each stop only once every 10 to 15 minutes. Transit has assured us that with these shorter routes, they will be able to have more buses arrive at high traffic stops within a shorter amount of time and carry close to the same amount of people as the old routes did. Alongside these route changes, the names of the routes are also changing. This is because the routes are so different from what they were before, keeping the same name would add extra and unnecessary confusion for students.

Another factor that SGA addressed with Transportation and Parking Services is that of accommodations for passengers who need them. Passengers who require accommodations due to physical disabilities will still be able to load from the front door like before. Alongside that accommodation, Accessible van services are still provided by UGA Paratransit. To seek these services, students need to contact the Disability Resource Center at 706-542-8719.

We know these changes will bring inconvenient challenges to students, but to ensure the safety of everyone on campus and in the surrounding communities, these changes had to be made.

To view the new routes, please visit tps.uga.edu/routechanges.