

# Transportation Survey Spring Quarter 2016 Alternative Transportation, WWU

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Alternative Transportation Coordinator, Greg McBride, VU Assistant  
Director-Facilities, Emma Palumbo, AS Board VP for Student Life*

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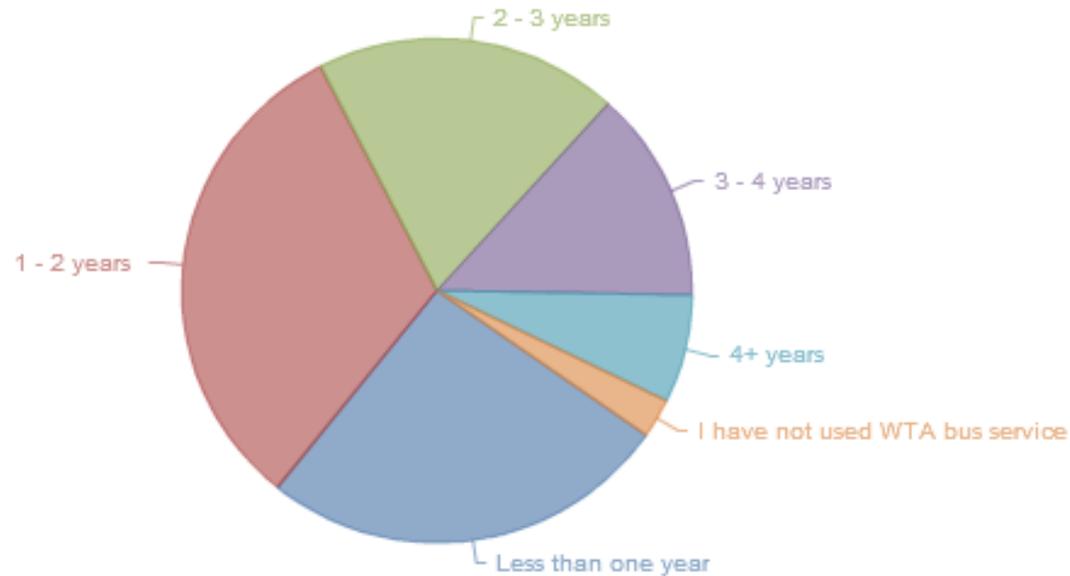
**Assessment, Training & Special Projects Manager, Dean of Students  
Unit**

**July 7, 2016**

# Transportation Survey Process

- A committee met in April of 2016 to discuss sending a survey to all students related to student satisfaction of the WTA bus service, service needs, and to gauge student attitudes and response to a potential fee increase.
- The members of the committee are as follows: Kay McMurren/Student Transportation, Ethan Wise/Alternative Transportation Coordinator, Greg McBride/VU Assistant Director-Facilities, Emma Palumbo/ AS Board VP for Student Life, and Christina Van Wingerden/Assessment, Training and Special Projects Manager for the Dean of Students Unit
- Questions were taken from the current WTA survey on the WTA website, ideas from the committee and refined by largely Kay McMurren and Ethan White.
- The survey was launched May 16, 2016 to the end of the quarter and closed in June of 2017.

# How long have you used WTA bus service?

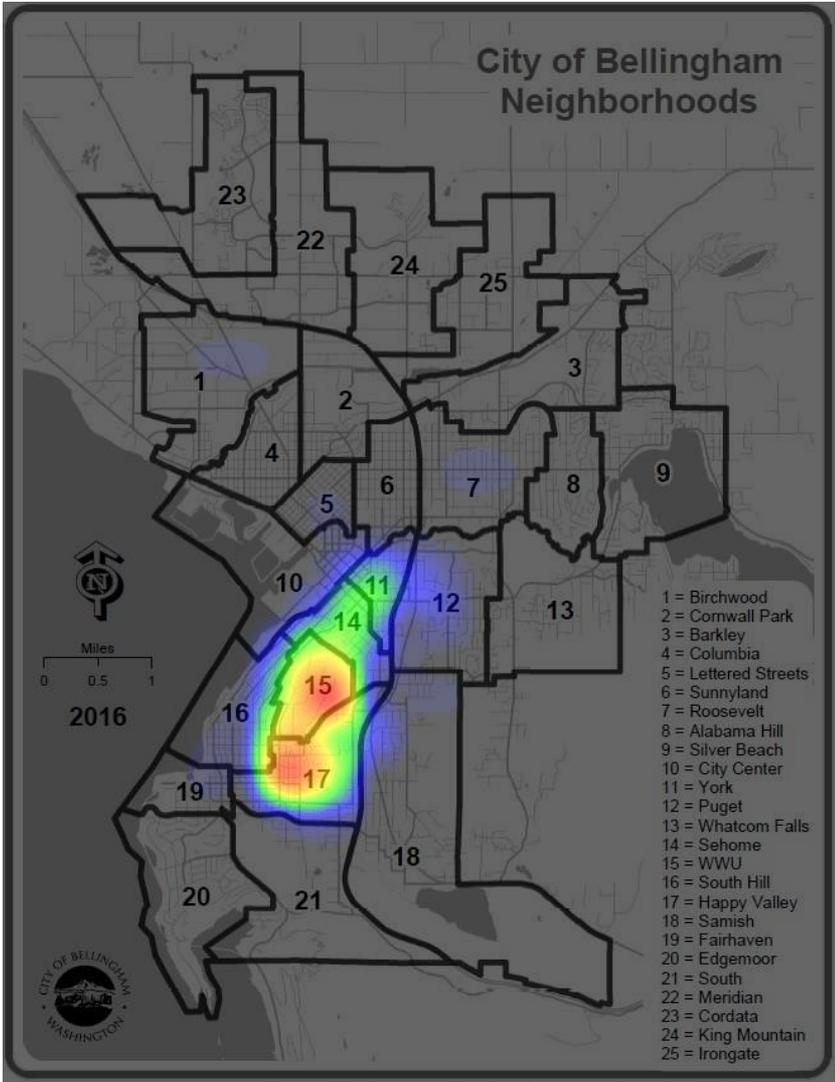


Only 2% (18) out of 722 respondents have not used WTA bus service.

32% (229) respondents have used WTA bus service for 1 to 2 years. (19%) 139 respondents have used WTA bus service for 2 to 3 years. 26% (188) respondents have used WTA bus service less than one year. 14% (98) respondents have used WTA bus service for 3 to 4 years. 7% (50) respondents for over 4 years. 26% (188) respondents have used WTA bus service for less than one year.

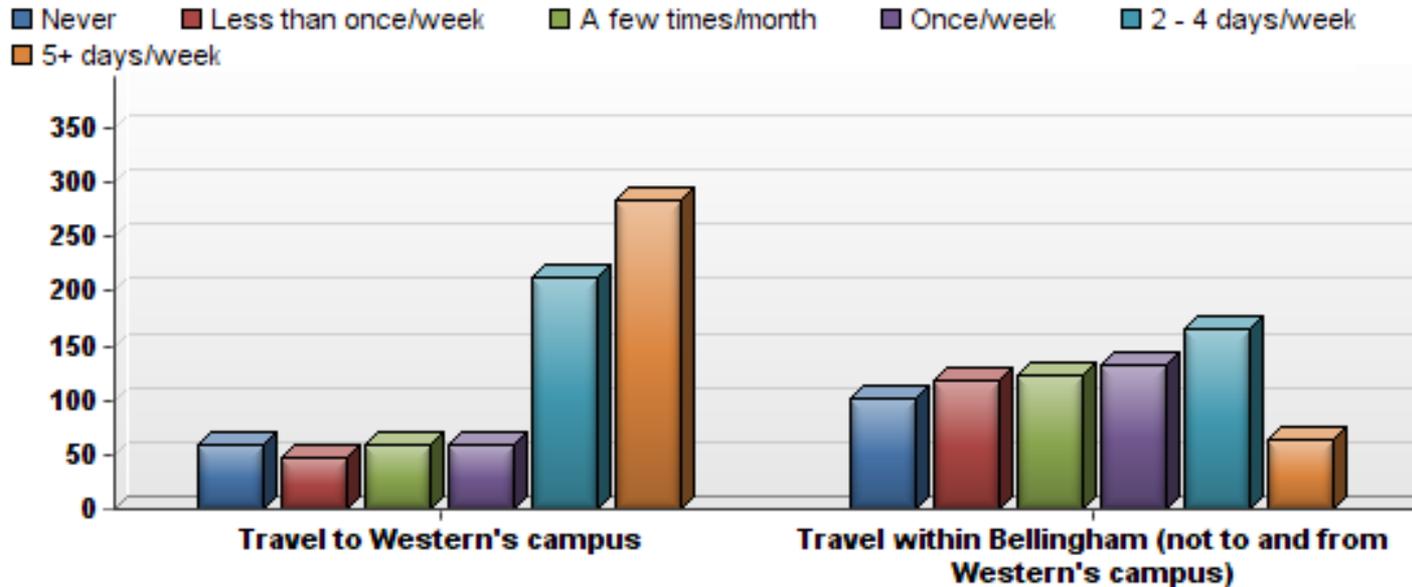
Please select where on this map you live while attending Western.

53% of students live in the WWU and Happy Valley regions.



Region	Response	%
1 = Birchwood	10	2%
2 = Cornwall Park	1	0%
3 = Barkley	11	2%
4 = Columbia	6	1%
5 = Lettered Streets	5	1%
7 = Roosevelt	12	2%
6 = Sunnyland	3	0%
8 = Alabama Hill	2	0%
9 = Silver Beach	3	0%
10 = City Center	10	2%
11 = York	42	7%
12 = Puget	25	4%
13 = Whatcom Falls	3	0%
14 = Sehome	55	9%
15 = WWU	165	27%
16 = South Hill	27	4%
17 = Happy Valley	157	26%
18 = Samish	26	4%
19 = Fairhaven	9	1%
20 = Edgemoor	1	0%
21 = South	1	0%
22 = Meridian	5	1%
23 = Cordata	7	1%
24 = King Mountain	1	0%
25 = Irongate	-	0%
Other	22	4%

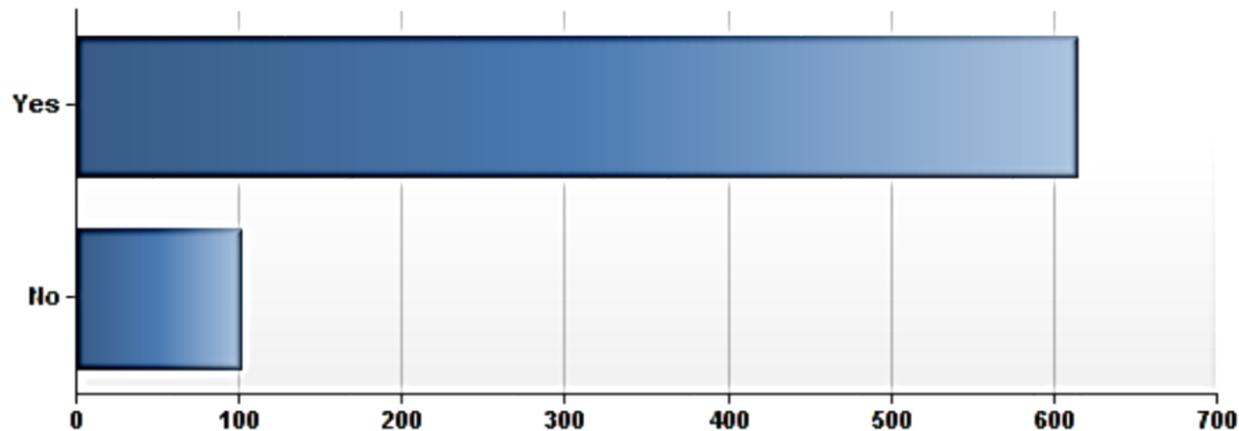
# How often do you use WTA Service to...



**Using WTA service to WWU Campus:** 39.31% of students travel to Western's campus five plus days per week; 29.44% two to four days per week; 8.33% once per week, 8.06% a few times/month, 6.53% less than once/week and 8.33% never.

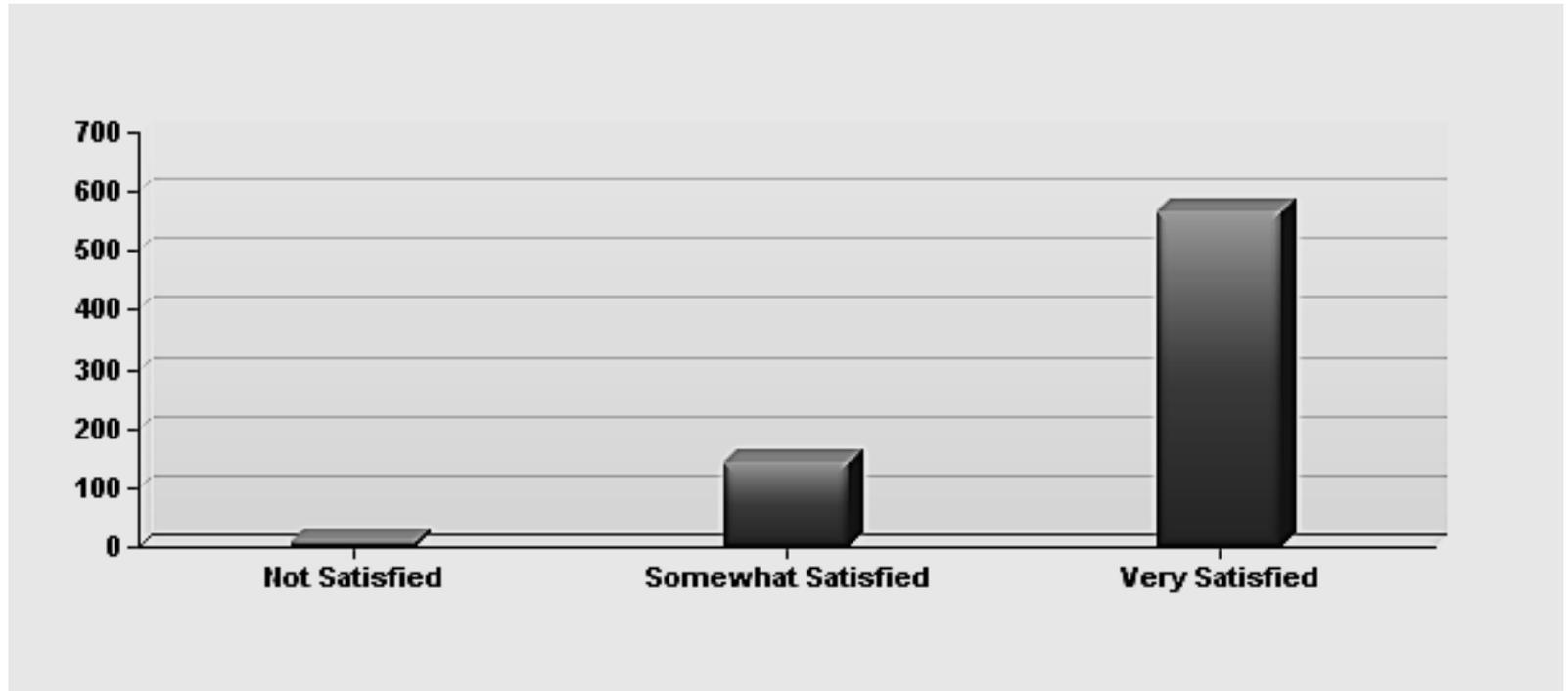
**Using WTA service to travel within Bellingham (not to and from Western's campus):** 8.94% of students travel within Bellingham five plus days per week, 23.55% two to four days per week, 18.87% once/week, 17.45% a few times/month, 16.88% less than once/week, 14.33% never.

Does the WTA service in your immediate neighborhood meet your transportation needs?



86% of respondents answered yes the WTA service in their immediate neighborhood meets their transportation needs. 14% respondents answered WTA service in their immediate neighborhood does not meet their immediate needs.

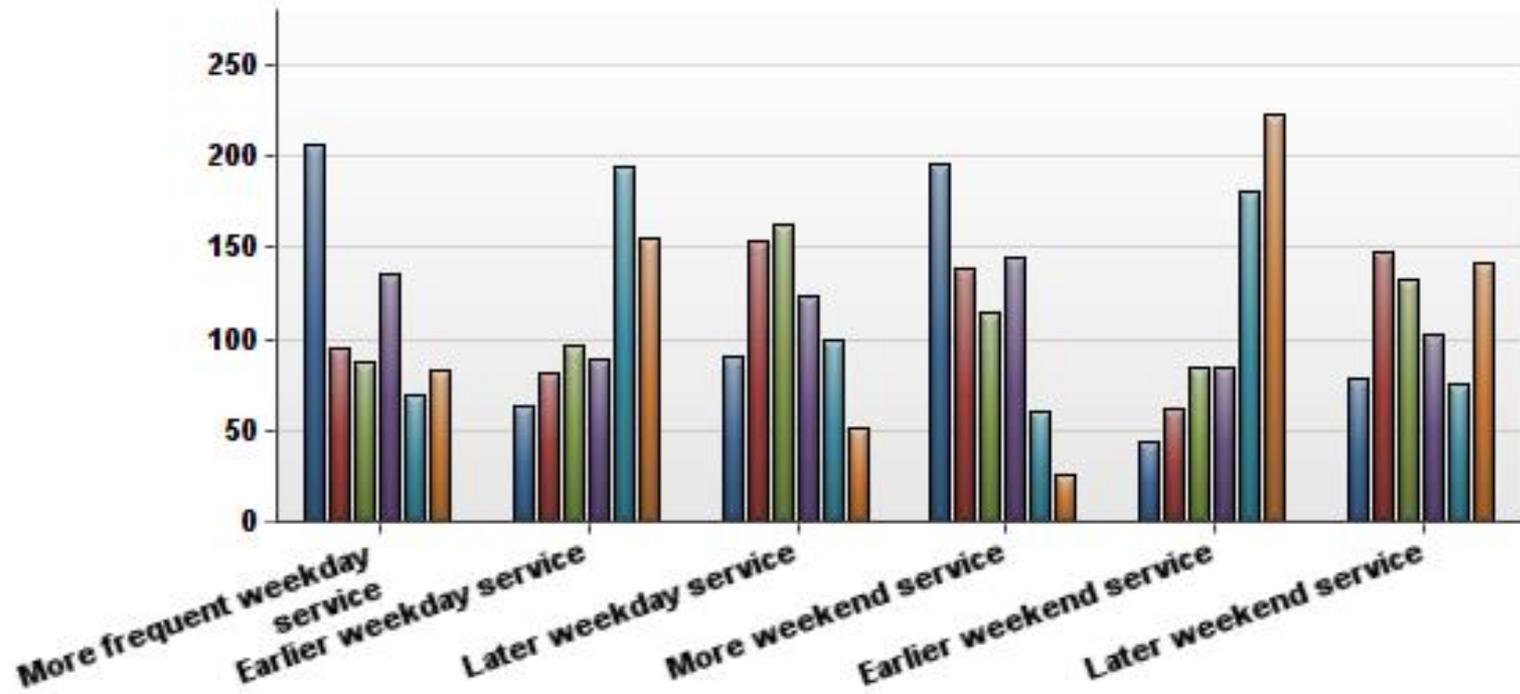
Please rate your customer service experience with drivers.



79% of respondents are very satisfied with their customer service experience with drivers, 20% of respondents are somewhat satisfied with their customer service experience, 1% of respondents indicated they are not satisfied with their customer service experience with drivers.

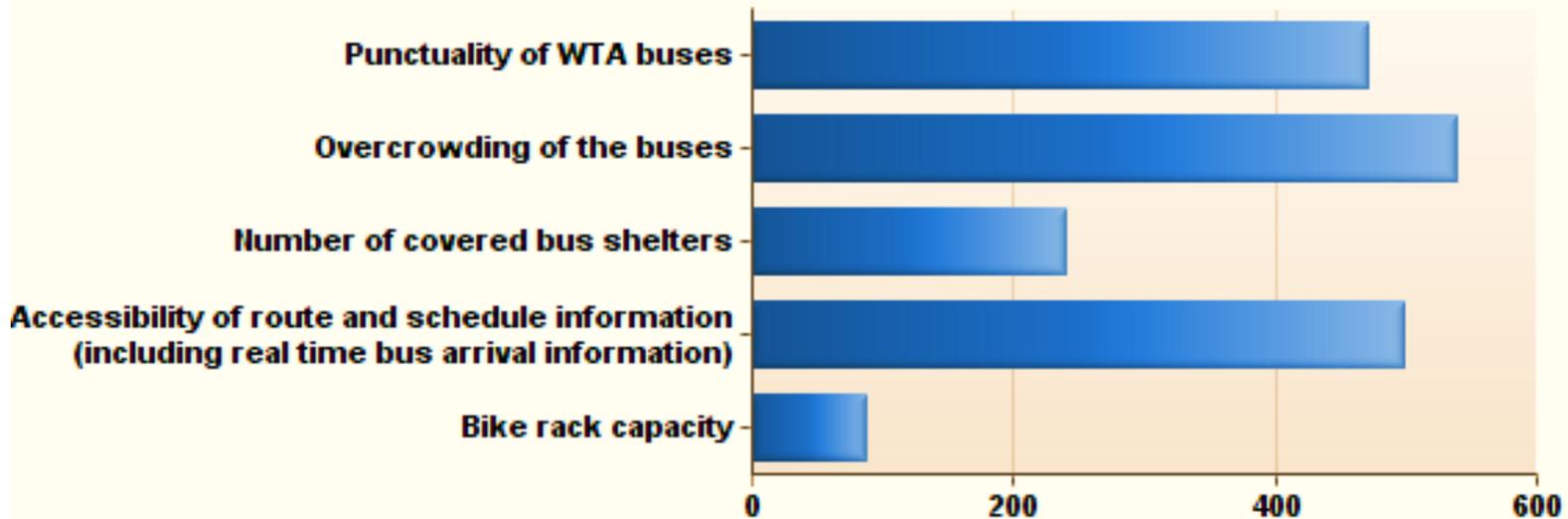
Please rank from most important to least important the service enhancement options you would like...

Choices were ranked from most important to least important; respondents were able their own six choices. Statistically it came to be in the order referred to below:



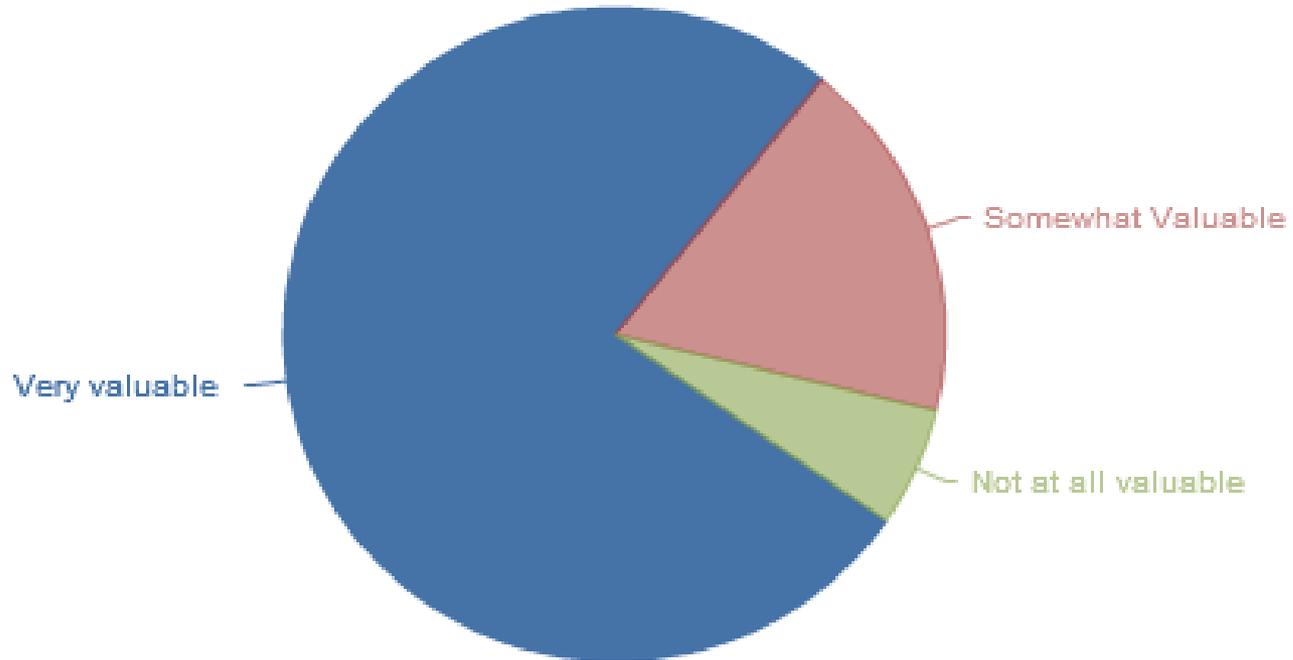
Most important enhancement requested: 1. Earlier weekend service, 2. More frequent weekday service, 3. More weekend service, 4. Earlier weekday service, 5. Later weekday service, and least important : 6. Later weekend service

Which THREE of the following do you feel are MOST important for WTA to improve upon?



67% of respondents selected **overcrowding of the buses** as the **number one** improvement WTA can make; **second accessibility of route and schedule Information** (including real time bus arrival information), **third punctuality** of WTA buses

How valuable do you find this increased bus service?



76% of respondents find the increased bus service very valuable 18% somewhat valuable, and 6% not at all valuable

# Have you ever been left behind or passed by due to buses being full?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	474	67%
2	No	238	33%
	Total	712	100%

67% of respondents selected they had been left behind or passed by due to buses being full, 33% indicated they had not been left behind due to buses being full.

## How often have you been left behind because of overcrowding of the buses?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Never	21	4%
2	1 - 5 times per quarter	368	78%
3	1 - 2 times per week	53	11%
4	More than 2 times per week	28	6%
	Total	470	100%

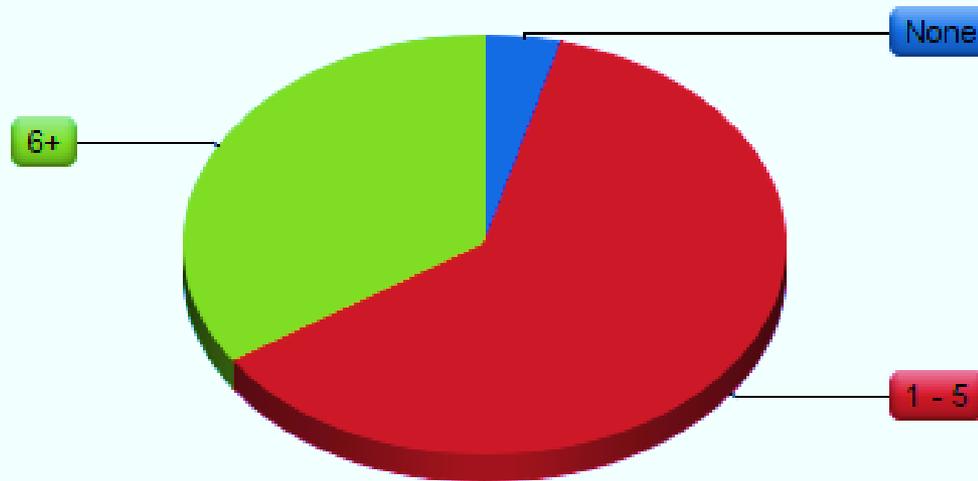
78% of respondents indicated they had been left behind because of overcrowding of buses 1 to 5 times per quarter, 11% respondents indicated being left behind 1 to 2 times per week, 6% indicated more than 2 times per week, and 4% indicated they had never been left behind because of overcrowding of the buses.

## What time did this occur?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	8:00 - 8:30 am	45	10%
2	8:30 - 9:00 am	82	19%
3	9:00 - 9:30 am	83	19%
4	9:30 - 10:00 am	150	35%
5	10:00 - 10:30 am	32	7%
6	10:30 - 11:00 am	39	9%
	Total	431	100%

The time frame of being left behind due to overcrowding of buses was highest between 9:30 am and 10:00 am in the morning at 35%, the second most frequent time of day this occurred was between 8:30 am-9:00 am (19%) and 9:00 am to 9:30 am (19%). Least frequent time of day was 10:00 am to 10:30 am

How many students were left along with yourself?



61% indicated one to five students were left with them, 34% indicated over six students were left with them, and 4% indicated there were no students left behind with them.

Please rate your overall satisfaction with WTA bus service.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Very Satisfied	447	63%
2	Somewhat Satisfied	246	35%
3	Not Satisfied (Please explain why)	13	2%
	Total	706	100%

63% of respondents rated their overall satisfaction with WTA bus service as very satisfied, 35% indicated they were somewhat satisfied, and 2% indicated they were not satisfied

# Comments to the selection of “not satisfied”

## Not Satisfied (Please explain why)

I don't use WTA

I don't believe the buses are timely enough, that's why I don't use the buses as much as I would like.

Busses need to be spread out! Not 2 busses every 15 minutes, 1 bus every 7! That would vastly improve my experience getting to class and the WTA would have a better idea of when they need more busses.

Their routes are not convenient for my schedule.

I dont need the bus

not enough busses in the morning 9-noon is the worst the busses are all full and pass by my stop on bill mcdonald

There needs to be later bus transportation at night because if I choose to drink and not drive I want a way to be able to get home safely and also go home at a time that is later than 9 or 10pm when the buses stop running.

I have seen the bus drivers treat riders disrespectfully based on their visual appearance. I have seen the "security" person at the bus depot ask a gentleman to leave the bus because he was assuming the man had alcohol on him. There is a pretty clear lack of regard for people who may be (appear to be) of lower socio-economic status.

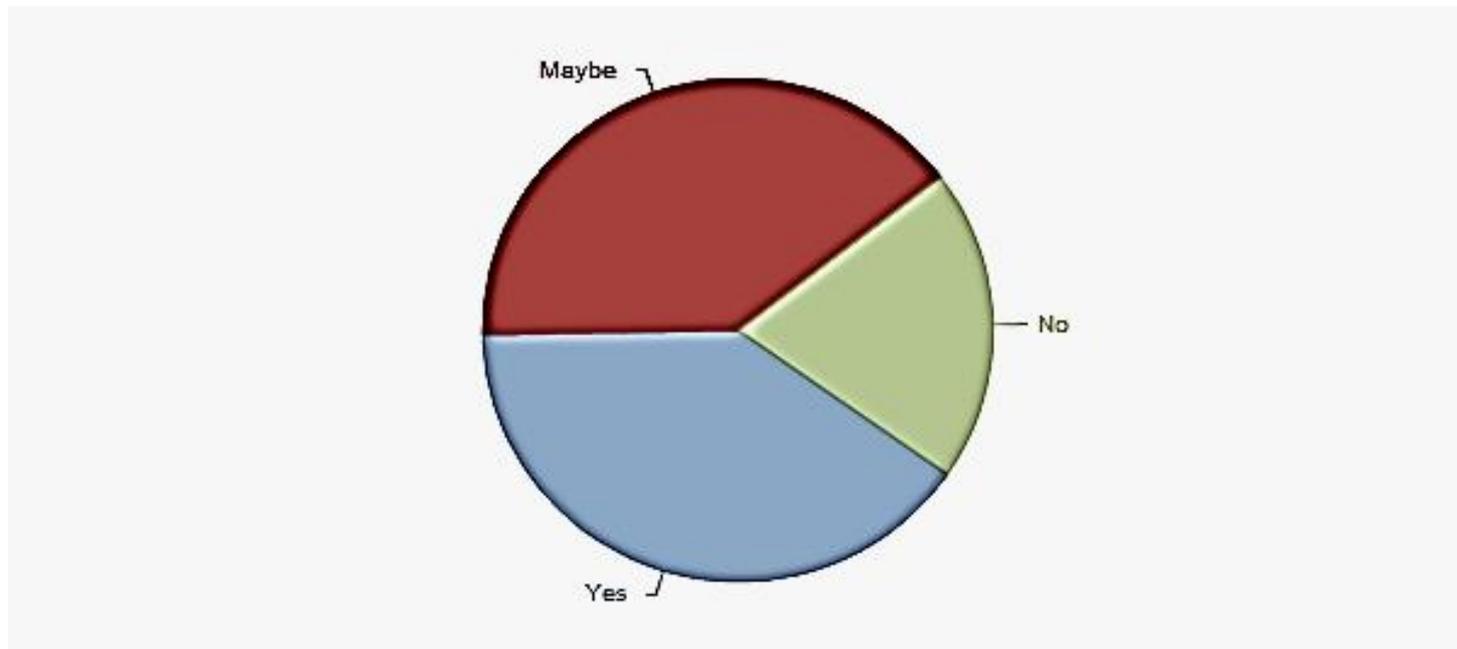
bus times are often wrong causing me to miss the bus I was supposed to take, wait ten to fifteen minutes, and then not be able to get onto that one because it was overcrowded. I also have been passed at night, around 11 when the buses stop running, even though the bus was NOT full, they were the last bus to run and didn't stop to get me and I had to walk home a mile in the dark alone (I am a female and this was right after a guy pulled a knife on two girls in the Haggan parking lot so I was scared and mad)

I am not a tall individual and there is nothing for me to hold onto if all the seats are filled. Most busses I've been on outside of Whatcom County have had straps to hold onto if you're standing. WTA busses do not have this, and thus it's very difficult for shorter individuals to stay afloat on the busses during busier hours.

just satisfied. why is that not an option?

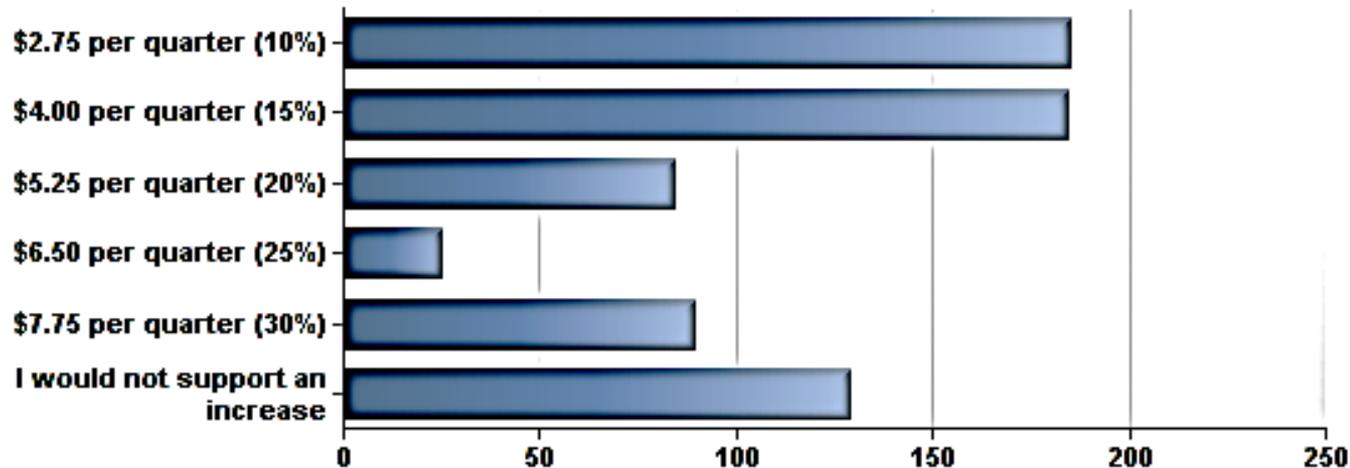
I want more shuttles down 32nd st.

Would you be willing to pay an increased Transportation Fee to retain the current level of bus service.



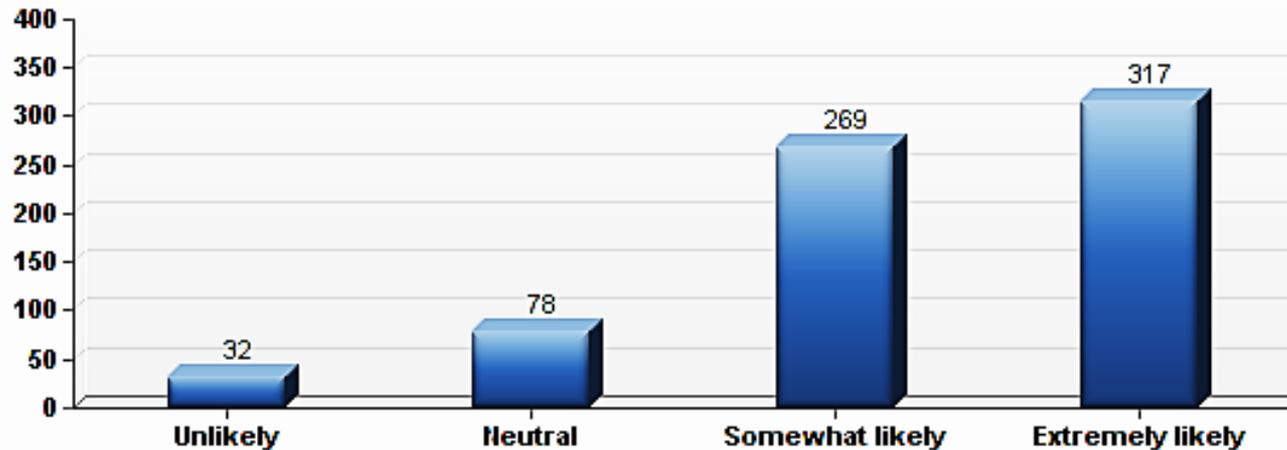
80% of students would agree or consider paying an increased Transportation Fee. 40% of respondents answered yes and 40% answered maybe to a transportation fee increase. 20% of respondents answered no to a transportation fee increase.

How much of an increase in the Transportation Fee (currently \$26.25 per quarter) would you be willing to pay.



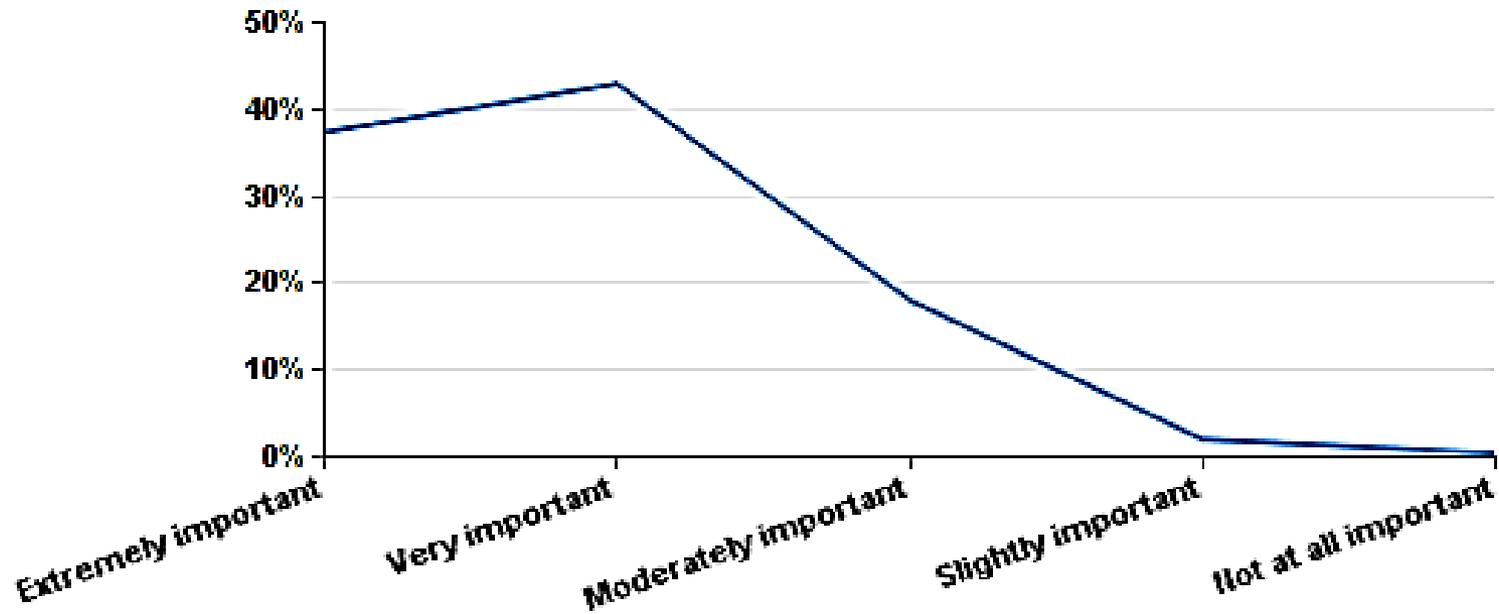
27% of respondents indicated they would pay \$2.75 per quarter (10% increase), 26% of respondents indicated they would pay \$4.00 per quarter (15% increase), 19% of respondents indicated they would not support an increase. 13% indicated they would pay a \$7.75 per quarter increase (30%), 12% a \$5.25 increase (20%), while 4% indicated they would pay a \$6.50 per quarter increase (25%).

How likely would you be (if you were a student at the time of the voting) to vote on this?



46% of respondents stated they would be extremely likely to vote on the fee if they were a student. 39% stated they would be somewhat likely to vote, 11% responded neutral, and 5% indicated they would be unlikely to vote.

How important do you think this issue is to Western students?



37% of respondents feel the transportation is extremely important to students.  
43% of respondents indicated this issue is very important. 18% moderately important  
2% slightly important.

## Anything else you want us to know?

- Accessibility and safety (lighting, etc.) of the bus stops is a big concern
- Need for bus service that matches time demands placed on students (Ex. Dining Hall employees do not have service that gets them to campus early enough/home late enough)
- Lots of frustration with busses passing stops, either because they are full or other reasons unknown
- If there are any changes to the fee, there should be a full explanation available to students about why the fee changed, what will be effected, and how the Transportation Fee works.
- Suggestion of a GPS location service
- Question why “WWU employees do not” pay the fee and/or have to “buy bus passes”
- Timing of how many busses arrive at the same time versus spacing them out

Anything else you want us to know?

- More or better service for areas outside of Bellingham
- Suggestion for an “app that tracks the real time travel of the busses”
- More late night shuttle location options
- Increased service to outer areas of the city
- Bus stops need to be ADA accessible
- More weekend times
- Make the bus route number visible on the inside of the bus

## Anything else you want us to know?

Many more comments and suggestions, including positive comments about WTA and the bus pass too. For full picture of student comments please read them in **Appendix A** section of the report.

Examples are:

- “WTA is the lifeblood of Bellingham/WWU campus. Without it. WWU becomes far less appealing as a college.”
- “The bus system is great and gets me to where I need to go when I need to get there. Drivers are very helpful, knowledgeable, friendly and professional. The ability to use the bus service for such a low price is great.”
- “WTA IS GREAT! Only complaint is that they don’t run at 6:30 which is nice for when someone works and 7 am and that in afternoons and weekend they are often 10 min late. This is for the bus 14 running on 24<sup>th</sup> st.”
- “I love the busses and want it to continue!”