

Syracuse University launches series of sustainability-oriented work-life and commuting options for staff, faculty and students

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Syracuse University is continuing its commitment to environmental sustainable leadership with several work-life and transportation initiatives that increase the convenience for faculty, staff and students to engage in environmentally friendly activities while also reducing the costs of commuting and parking.

In developing these sustainable initiatives, the University continues toward an effective and efficient plan to ensure a healthy and sustainable lifestyle, as part of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment signed in 2007:

- A new "Flexible Work and Sustainability Initiative" unveiled today will encourage the use of flexible work options that support the University's commitment to energy conservation and sustainability. Among the sustainable benefits of flexible work options are reduced fuel consumption and costs, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, less campus parking congestion, improved air quality, and reduced noise and traffic. Supervisors are being asked to explore with those who report to them various options for mutually beneficial flexible work schedules, such as a compressed work schedule (four-day, 40-hour/37.5-hour week), telecommuting one or more work days, or other creative approaches toward a flexible work arrangement that can meet a unique need of a staff member or department.

Each proposal to participate in a flexible work schedule must be considered on the basis of whether the work to be performed can be accomplished in a flexible work option without diminishing department service; the daily needs of the department or the job requirements of some positions may limit participation. University supervisors were recently provided a Flexible Work and Sustainability Initiative toolkit developed by the Office of Human Resources to initiate and guide discussion of these options with full-time exempt and non-exempt staff, and an online resource for both staff and supervisors can be found at http://humanresources.syr.edu/worklife/flex_work.html.

- The One-Seat Rides Program encourages University employees to park their cars and ride a Centro bus directly to campus. SU employees can park in a convenient location close to home and ride Centro to the University without having to change buses; at the end of the day, they ride the Centro bus back to their cars. More information can be found at <http://parking.syr.edu>.
- The Centro Fare Deal program/Guaranteed Ride Home Service allows SU employees to purchase pre-tax bus passes and offers a Guaranteed Ride Home Service, which provides a ride to one location from any SU location in

the event of an emergency, working late or in the event that all the regularly scheduled buses have stopped running. More information can be found at <http://parking.syr.edu>.

- The new carpool parking program is an option for University permit parking that provides parking for two or more University employees who commute to work together. By issuing a multi-vehicle permit valid for use with multiple vehicles, a carpool arrangement allows individuals to share driving responsibilities and lower the cost of commuting and parking, and reduces parking demand and traffic on campus. More information can be found at <http://parking.syr.edu>.
- The SU Ride Share program allows University community members to register with Parking and Transit Services and match themselves with people from the same area, sharing the driving responsibilities. There is no cost for this program, and each person retains his/her own permit. More information can be found at <http://parking.syr.edu>.
- The University will offer the option of Zipcar use for students, faculty and staff. Subscribers can rent a Zipcar for an hour or the day and not have to keep a car on campus. The service will be formally introduced this month. More information on Zipcars can be found at <http://www.zipcar.com>.

"During the past several years, we have committed ourselves at Syracuse University to taking a national leadership role in promoting and practicing sustainability," says Chancellor and President Nancy Cantor. "As we practice Scholarship in Action and engage the world, our students, faculty and staff are living out this commitment in many ways. These work-life and commuting initiatives are based in the concepts of sustainability and are intended to help relieve the personal burden felt by so many due to fuel and commuting costs, while also reducing the amount of greenhouse gas emissions released through daily campus travel."

This fall, a University task force will meet to evaluate additional options for sustainability-focused work schedules, including possibly closing the University during winter break and implementing shorter work weeks during other academic breaks.