



Flexcar offers alternative to campus parking

by Sarah Owen

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Starting today, students needing a ride around campus can rent one for as little as \$8.

Flexcar enables students and staff to rent vehicles by the hour without having to worry about paying for gas or finding a parking spot.

For \$8 to \$10 an hour, or \$55 for the whole day, drivers as young as 18 years old can rent a Flexcar. The rental fee covers the cost of gas, insurance, maintenance and includes 24-hour emergency assistance.

The vehicles are checked out from, and returned to designated parking spots located on campus, including spots along College Avenue and in Lots 17 and 45.

"This brings a whole new level of convenience and accessibility to students," said Judi Nelson, a program manager at ASU Parking and Transit Services. "I think this is a great option for commuters."

Drivers interested in renting a car must first sign up for membership, Nelson said, but the \$35 membership fee is waived for those who sign up before Nov. 28.

Flexcar membership is open to students, staff, faculty and anyone residing in the Tempe community.

ASU currently has approximately 18,000 parking spots at the Tempe campus, but up to 70,000 visitors vie for spaces every day, according to officials in Parking and Transit Services.

The extra visitors create a logistical nightmare, Nelson said.

"[Flexcar] provides a viable, sustainable transportation option," she said. Drivers can sign up to rent a car one minute in advance through Flexcar's Web site, flexcar.com/oncampus.

ASU's fleet of 10 vehicles includes Toyota Yaris, a Mini Cooper and hybrid Honda Civics. Toyota Tacomas are also available.

The car-sharing system may prove most beneficial to students or staff members who either live on campus or walk, bus or bike to school, Nelson said.

"I think it's really going to benefit students who don't have a car here," she added, "or anybody who takes the bus and needs to get to a doctor's appointment during the day."

Flexcar may work well in conjunction with ASU's inter-campus and on-campus shuttle systems, Nelson said. Flash, the Orbit neighborhood shuttle system and the Valley Metro bus system are all free to students.

Nelson said students could utilize the bus system to get to campus and then pick up a Flexcar to run errands throughout the day.



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SAVE GREEN: ASU is implementing the Flexcar system with a fleet of ten cars for student, faculty, staff and community rental by the day or by the hour for Flexcar members. The cars will be parked around campus and the city, with two parked on the street near the University Towers.

But Kristen Howard, an anthropology junior, said she didn't see the need for the system.

"I don't see why you wouldn't just use your own car," she said. "I just pay for parking — the max is eight bucks a day — and I don't have any problems finding parking spots."

Howard added that she doesn't usually have problems with parking because she arrives on campus before 6 a.m.

Stephanie Mayer, an undeclared sophomore, said she thought the program was a good idea.

"It'd be a lot more convenient than walking," Mayer said. "And sometimes you have a lot of stuff to carry."

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