To: Dr. Erika Paterson, ENGL 301 Instructor

From: Aman Johal, ENGL 301 Student

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Subject: Formal Proposal to Increase Student Transportation Methods on Campus

Introduction

The University of British Columbia is one of the largest institutions in Canada, not only by enrollment, but the Vancouver campus spans a vast area of over 400 hectares in size. With a large number of course offerings combined with the size of the campus, it is not uncommon to see students rushing around to attend their classes on time. Back-to-back classes only give a student, at most, ten minutes to make their next class. This feat is near impossible even at a brisk walking pace if class locations are far enough apart from each other. This proposal aims to add more convenient campus transportation options to assistant students in making their classes in the allotted time.

Audience Description

UBC staff and advisors at Campus and Community Planning – UBC Vancouver

Statement of Problem

UBC is home to more than 60,000 undergraduate students offering them a multitude of courses to fulfil and supplement their degree of choice, whether it be through core courses or electives. However, often, students enrolled in a wide range of course subject topics will find themselves having classes all over campus with some schedules permitting only ten minutes to make it across campus between classes. The inevitable and unavoidable lateness to classes that are back-to-back can result in a student missing crucial info at the start of a lecture, cause a student to be late to an in-class exam, or trigger undue stress on a student. This proposal outlines the need for short-term rentable transportation solutions in order to facilitate faster travel around campus.

Proposed Solution

An effective solution is to adopt a rentable e-scooter model that is commonly seen in major cities throughout North America. Companies such as Bolt, Lime, and Bird are all eScooter ride sharing companies that operate in North America. In fact, UBC’s Okanogan campus, through a joint program with the City of Kelowna and Lime already has e-bikes and e-scooters on campus to make travel around campus easier. While UBC Vancouver currently has a partnership with eBike company Hopr, it is seldom used as bikes need to be picked up/parked in specific locations, the user experience is not simple, and the bikes themselves are not easy to use. The hallmark of eScooters is the ability to grab and go and park wherever needed. The increased accessibility and increased speed, provides a reasonable solution to class tardiness when the distance needed to be walked is too large.

Scope

To assess how to implement an eScooter ride sharing system most effectively at UBC, I plan to pursue these areas of inquiry:

1. Is the student body frustrated at back-to-back class schedules and the difficulties of attending class on time?
2. What are the main reasons students do not use the current rideshare Hopr?
3. How large is the demand for a more convenient rideshare option, particularly eScooters?
4. What are the potential challenges with introducing a new ridesharing option with regards to key stake holders, Lime (for example), UBC, Hopr?

Methods

My primary data source will be a survey conducted on a random sampling of UBC students of all years across campus. This survey will allow me to gather first-hand information about the current student opinion towards rushing to classes, the current use, and barriers for use towards Hopr, and the level of openness towards an alternative ride share options.

Secondary sources will include publications on the benefits of ridesharing platforms in communities/cities, as well as articles and expert opinions on current university ride sharing options and barriers.

My Qualifications

I am a third-year student in the BCS program at UBC and this is my second degree at UBC. I frequently find myself rushing across campus only to show up to a class 5-10 minutes late. This has given me first-hand experience with the stress and futility of trying to cover campus to make a class on time. Furthermore, my experience as a pharmacy manager has provided me with problem solving skills to address workflow problems with the goal of keeping employees (or students) happy and stress free.

Conclusion

The UBC Vancouver campus would benefit from a more accessible easier to use ridesharing option, in the form of eScooters. This would allow students who have back-to-back classes on opposite sides of campus to attend each class on time with no disruption to the lecturer and the students learning. The current rideshare option is seldomly used on campus, and by accessing the areas of inquiry I outlined about, I can determine the feasibility and demand of implementing a new campus ridesharing option. With your approval I will begin research immediately.

Citations

"Sustainable Transportation: Bike Share." Sustainability at UBC Okanagan, University of British

Columbia, n.d., <https://sustain.ok.ubc.ca/operations/sustainable-transportation/bike-share/>

Kruger, Mayako. “The Ubyssey's 2021/22 Breakdown of UBC's Enrolment Stats, Admission Rates and More.” *The Ubyssey*, 25 Feb. 2022, https://ubyssey.ca/news/ubc-enrolment-stats-202122/.