

The Extension of Bus Shuttle Services between the Main and Downtown
Campuses at Grand Valley State University Libraries.

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**The Extension of Bus Shuttle Services between the Main and Downtown
Campuses at Grand Valley State University Libraries.**

Executive Summary

At Grand Valley State University, the Zumberge and Steelcase libraries are respectively located on the Allendale and Grand Rapids campuses. They currently operate on asynchronous schedules; consequently, students must use the Rapid shuttle to travel to Allendale, when the downtown library closes at midnight. Presently, the Rapid shuttle ends service at 1:00 A.M., one hour before the Zumberge Library closes. Therefore, downtown students must either use personal transportation to fully utilize library services, leave the Zumberge library before 1 A.M., or not use the library at all. Grand Valley State University Libraries propose to extend the hours of operation for the shuttle service, between the Allendale and Downtown campuses. The shuttle service will be lengthened by two hours each day, Sunday through Wednesday, for a duration of 42 weeks. The library seeks funding in the amount of \$188,428.80 for the period of August 1, 2010 to May 31, 2011. This initiative will provide equal access of library facilities to all students, promote academic achievement, and reduce the risk of injury for commuting students.

Setting

Grand Valley State University

Grand Valley State University's main campus is situated in the West Michigan city of Allendale, between the major commerce centers of Grand Rapids and Holland. It was originally chartered in 1960, under the name of Grand Valley College, but has since changed its name to Grand Valley State University, as the breadth and diversity of programs have expanded. The site location was based

Allendale's potential to provide maximum access to students in West Michigan's eight counties (Travis & Mapes, 1995). Recently, Grand Valley has added several new campus locations to serve the extended West Michigan community, with course offerings available in Allendale, Grand Rapids, Holland, Muskegon, and Traverse City. Students can choose from over 200 available programs, with 77 undergraduate majors, and 28 graduate degrees. In the 2009-2010 academic year, enrollment at Grand Valley totaled 24,408 students. The majority of attending students are undergraduates, with a proportion of 20,850 undergraduate students to 3,558 students enrolled in graduate programs ("Quick facts," 2009)

Grand Valley prides itself on providing the following services and opportunities for their students:

- "Liberal education focus, emphasizing critical thinking and creative problem solving."
- "Talented faculty who are dedicated to teaching, mentoring students, and actively involved in their academic discipline."
- "Small classes sizes that are taught by professors, regardless of class level or subject orientation."
- "Facilities that provide students the opportunity for research, athletics, and social interaction."
- "Low cost resources to students, such as free wireless Internet, and busing between the Allendale and Grand Rapids campuses ("Academic excellence," 2009).

Library Mission and Programs

At Grand Valley State University, the library is a crucial element for the provision of, and access to, information that will empower students and the university to achieve academic excellence. The processes of "acquisitions, application, dissemination, and preservation," provide the core foundation to establishing the following university values:

- 1.) A distinct, liberally educated university culture that reflects the regional populous, and embraces the ideas and values of international diversity.
- 2.) An environment that "nurtures civility, mutual respect, teamwork, diversity, innovation,

flexibility, risk-taking, and professional growth."

3.) "A comfortable, engaging, and secure place for study, research, work, reflection, and interaction."

4.) Collections that are relevant and accessible for the production of new knowledge and scholarship ("About GVSU libraries," 2009).

Library/Facilities

Grand Valley State University has a total of six libraries: the Zumberge Library, Seidman House, Steelcase Library, Frey Foundation Learning Center, Women's Center, and the Van Andel Research Institution.

Zumberge Library:

The Zumberge Library is the largest library at Grand Valley State University, and is located on the main campus in Allendale. It houses all standard library materials for a liberal arts university, including the sciences, humanities, and popular materials. A special sub-section of the Zumberge Library is devoted to the curriculum materials library (CML); the CML is "devoted to make available for preview, review, analysis, and use, a sampling of current, high-quality instructional materials for preschool through grade twelve ("Curriculum Materials Library," 2009).

The Zumberge Library is also a member of The Federal Depository Library Program, which distributes government documents to universities, in order to "provide public access to Government information online, or to produce or procure printed publications that serve the information needs of the U.S. Congress, Federal agencies, and the American public" ("Government Resources," 2009).

The Seidman House:

The Seidman House is located directly across from the Zumberge library on Grand Valley's main

campus, and contains the special collections and archived material collected by the university.

Both print and digital archival collections are maintained by the Seidman library staff, and contains main collections in,

- 35,000 books and materials primarily consisting of Michigan authors.
- Incunabula and 16th Century Printing
- Abraham Lincoln, The Civil War, and Slavery.
- University History archives
- The Digital Library Collection (“Special collections,” 2009).

The Steelcase Library:

The Steelcase Library is located within Grand Valley's Pew Campus, in downtown Grand Rapids. The space within the library is primarily reserved for reading areas, and focuses its emphasis upon the following materials:

- Business
- Law
- Social work
- Public and Nonprofit Administration
- Engineering
- Criminal Justice (“Steelcase library,” 2009).

The Frey Foundation Learning Center

The Frey Foundation Learning Center is located in the Center for Health Sciences on Grand Valley's Pew Campus (Grand Rapids). The emphasis of materials in the Frey Learning Center is focused upon health sciences, nursing, and medical materials. Special collections include

- The Gerontology Collection
- Health Professions Theses
- Health Professions videos and DVD's (“Frey Foundation,” 2009).

Grand Valley State University Women's Center:

The Women's Center Library operates independently from the GVSU library system, yet its contents

are listed within the electronic library catalog. The Women's Center Library is located within the Women's Center, which is stationed at the Kirkof Building on GVSU's main campus. The material contained in this collection consists of books, magazines, periodicals, and videos, which focus upon gender issues and inequalities ("Women's center," 2009).

The Van Andel Research Institute:

The Van Andel Research Institute is associated with Grand Valley State University and its science graduate programs. It houses science related documents, research projects, and services, but the extent of these collections is largely unknown to the general public, due to the classified nature of the research information ("Van Andel," 2009).

Statement of Need

The Grand Valley State University Library System serves a phenomenal group of faculty and students. Grand Valley is the sixth largest public university in Michigan, and places fourth among the highest median ACT, and mid-50% ACT scores for entering students. Grand Valley additionally places second behind only the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, for the number of entering students with a GPA of 3.0 or higher (Haas, 2009). To serve the educational needs of these remarkable men and women, the Grand Valley State University Library system provides access to six libraries on two campuses: the Allendale Campus, and the Pew Campus in Grand Rapids.

Within recent years, the library collections, and the use of the collections, have significantly increased. Between June 2003 and June 2008, the total holdings of the library system rose from 1,573,046 to 2,189,029 materials, with the number of books, periodicals, and documents, increasing by 58.1% during the period of 2006 to 2008. ("Information about university libraries," 2009). The collection use has also yielded similar results. The time span from 2002/03 to 2007/2008 has demonstrated an

increase in library use that has more than doubled, expanding utilization numbers from 316,762 to 649,487 (“Information about university libraries,”2009). [Appendix I]

The predominant portion of the student body is served the Zumberge and Steelcase libraries, which are respectively located on the Allendale and Pew Campuses. As students have the option of enrolling in classes on either location, Grand Valley State University, in conjunction with the Rapid Bus Line, provide a shuttle service to transport students between campuses. This service is free of charge to students, faculty, and staff. The bus line not only serves to facilitate academic cooperation and learning between campuses, but also alleviates parking constraints, environmental pollution, and aids individuals who cannot afford the expense of personal transportation. The addition of the Rapid service has proven extremely successful, showing a ridership increase of 5,140% between 1996 and 2009 (“Ridership statistics,” 2009). [Appendix II]

Currently, the Zumberge and the Steelcase libraries function on asynchronous schedules. The weekday hours of operation are as follows: [table 1]

	Zumberge	Steelcase @ DEV	Rapid bus Service	Rapid Weekend Connector
Sunday	noon – 2:00 a.m.	11-midnight	6 – 1 a.m.	
Monday	7:30 - 2:00 a.m.	7:30 - midnight	6 – 1 a.m.	
Tuesday	7:30 - 2:00 a.m.	7:30 - midnight	6 – 1 a.m.	
Wednesday	7:30 - 2:00 a.m.	7:30 - midnight	6 – 1 a.m.	
Thursday	7:30 - midnight	7:30 - midnight	6 – 1 a.m.	
Friday	7:30 - 9:00 p.m.	7:30 - 9:00 p.m.	6 – 6 p.m.	Friday: 6p - 3a
Saturday	9:00 - 9:00 p.m.	9:00 - 9:00 p.m.		Saturday: 7a - 3a

(“University hours,” 2009) and (“Dates of service,” 2009)

Presently, the Rapid shuttle service does not alleviate the discrepant hours existing between the Zumberge and Steelcase libraries. Downtown students, who wish to access library facilities after

closing time [midnight], cannot logically travel to the Zumberge library in Allendale using the Rapid shuttle system. The campuses are separated by a distance of 10.9 miles, which is approximately 30 minutes of travel time by bus. The Rapid's last pickup occurs at 1 A.M., providing an approximate allocation of 30 minutes, where students can walk to the library, work on assignments, and return to the bus stop. This does not provide sufficient time to use the library effectively. Downtown students, therefore, do not possess the capability of fully utilizing library services, till Zumberge's closing time of 2 A.M. These students must either use personal transportation, leave the Zumberge library before 1 A.M., or not use the library at all. The current scheduling of the Rapid restricts library services, and potentially endangers students, by increasing commuting traffic between the hours of 12 A.M. and 4 A.M. This has been statistically found to be the most dangerous time on the road, producing the greatest number of fatal car accidents (Elliott & AAA, 2009).

At this time, the Grand Valley general fund will not issue additional money for the expansion of shuttle services, due to state budget cutbacks. The library is seeking to conduct this initiative in cooperation with the Private Donor Fund, a competitive fund for the improvement of university services. If the proposal initiative is deemed successful, the Board of Trustees had agreed to provide continued financial support for the initiative. Therefore, initial funds must be acquired to prove the success of the bus expansion initiative.

PROPOSED PROGRAM

Proposed initiative

Grand Valley State University Libraries proposes to extend the hours of operation for the shuttle service between the Allendale and Downtown campus, from August 1, 2010 to May 31, 2011. The

shuttle service will be lengthened by two hours each day, Sunday through Wednesday, with the last shuttle leaving at 2:30 A.M. The service will effectively end at 3:00 A.M., when students are safely returned to the downtown or Allendale campuses.

The expanded bus schedule will synchronize the shuttle service with the Zumberge library's hours of operation, and will serve a greater diversity of students. As the Steelcase library primarily caters to business students, extended hours at the Steelcase library, will not solve access problems for downtown residents in non-business majors. The Zumberge library offers materials for all majors, and therefore, the extension of the shuttle service would provide greater access to all university students.

Project Goals

Grand Valley State University Library has four goals to achieve from the proposed initiative:

- 1.) To provide equal access of library facilities to all students at Grand Valley State University.
- 2.) To increase student academic performance through increased library access.
- 3.) To reduce student commuting traffic between the hours of 12 A.M. to 4 A.M., when the most fatal traffic accidents occur.

Additionally, the proposal has the following indirect goals that can be achieved from the proposed initiative:

- 4.) Reduction in environmental pollution through the reduction of commuting automobiles.
- 5.) The reduction of automobile maintenance expenses for students.
- 6.) A reduction in the number of students driving while intoxicated; shuttle services would extend past bar closing times, and would be available to students experiencing the Grand Rapids Nightlife.

The research conducted by Wolf (2005) has demonstrated a positive relationship between the frequency of library visits and GPA. Given the increase of library use on campus, more than doubling since 2003, and the 5,140% increase of ridership on the Rapid (“Ridership statistics, 2009), it is believed that expanding shuttle services will significantly aid in improving access to library facilities. Consequently, it is believed that increasing opportunities for access will boost the frequency of library visits, and therefore, improve the academic success of students.

The expansion of the shuttle service will additionally reduce the amount of students commuting by personal transportation between campuses, in order to access library facilities. Elliott and the American Automobile Association (2009), found that the highest number of fatal crashes occur between the hours of 12 A.M. and 4 A.M. This is an alarming statistic, because student commuters would be required to travel during this time span. It is believed that an expansion of shuttle services would reduce the need to commute between campuses via personal transportation, potentially reducing fatal crashes or accidents, thus increasing student safety.

The proposed initiative has two indirect goals or benefits that can be additionally achieved. The Rapid shuttle service is an environmentally safer, and a more cost effective option than commuting through personal transportation. In the fiscal year 2008/2009, the rapid saved 1,051,505 gallons of gas, and \$12,197,458 in automobile maintenance costs.

Rapid Cost and Environmental Impacts [table 2] (“Rapid Cost,” 2009).

Fiscal Year	Riders	# Miles Saved	Auto Operating Costs Saved	# Gallons Gas Saved By Riders
2004-2005	445,986	5,797,818	\$2,174,181.75	289,891
2005-2006	684,746	8,902,698	\$3,597,227.01	445,085

2006-2007	1,651,816	21,473,608	\$8,696,811.24	1,073,680
2007-2008	1,977,339	25,705,407	\$11,567,433.15	1,285,270
2008-2009*	1,617,700*	21,030,100*	\$12,197,458.00*	1,051,505*

Additionally, the extension of shuttle hours will have the indirect benefit, of reducing the number of students driving under the influence between campuses. Grand Valley's downtown campus is within walking distance of many restaurants, bars, and social activities. If the Rapid service is expanded by until 2:30 A.M., students will be able to use the service to travel home safely, as 2:00 A.M. is the closing time for bars in Michigan. It is believed that this will reduce the number to drivers operating vehicles under the influence of alcohol, and will consequently increase community safety.

Required Funding and Proposed Expenses

The total monetary expenditure to fund this proposal is \$188,428.80. This figure will cover the cost of ten buses for an extended period of 2 hours per night, at 4 days per week, for a duration of 42 weeks. The Rapid charges Grand Valley an operational fee of \$56.08 per bus, (*Parking Today*, 2005) which covers the costs of drivers, insurance, fuel, and maintenance fees.

Proposed Budget [table 3]

Price Per Bus (P)	\$56.08
Number of Buses Needed (B)	10
Additional Hours/day of extended shuttle service (H)	2

Number of Days per week of extended shuttle service (D)	4
Number of Weeks of extended Shuttle Service (W)	42
Total	\$188,428.80

$$\text{Total} = [P] * [B] * [H] * [D] * [W]$$

Proposal Promotion and Evaluation:

To promote the extended hours of the campus shuttle service, Grand Valley Libraries will conduct the following cost efficient activities:

- Advertise new shuttle hours on the library's homepage
- Advertise and update the shuttle hours on Grand Valley's Rapid homepage.
- Place paper signs on library entrances, advertising new shuttle hours
- Send out email updates on the university listserv, advertising new shuttle hours.

To evaluate the success of the proposal initiative, Grand Valley State University will use the following methods:

- Library Census records
- Continue using user surveys to analyze the correlation between library frequency and GPA.
- Use Grand Valley's MDOT Public Transportation Project to analyze bus usage during the extended shuttle service period.
- Use MDOT statistics to determine if accidents have declined on Lake Michigan Dr., the main

route used to travel between campuses.

Currently, Grand Valley State University is conducting the “West Michigan Transit Linkages Study” (2007), in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Transportation. Information from this study, including statistics on public transportation use at GVSU, will be used to analyze the success of the proposed initiative. Major areas of concern will include shuttle usage numbers, as well as accident report numbers occurring on Lake Michigan Drive, the main transportation route between campuses. Grand Valley State University Libraries will additionally continue to maintain library census records and conduct user surveys, to analyze library usage, and the correlation between library use and GPA. The following criteria must be met to yield a successful initiative:

- The library census must increase by an average of 32 people per day, during the time of extended shuttle service.
- The total number of users of the shuttle service must increase by 62 people per day, during the time of extended shuttle service.
- Library frequency and GPA should demonstrate a positive correlation from user surveys.

These criteria were based on the usage and cost analysis from table 4, and the calculation to determine met cost (below table 4). The savings from maintenance fees and gallons of gas was adjusted to accommodate the year to date total usage of the rapid, which is currently 2,380,838 riders. (Appendix II).

Cost Saved per Rider on Shuttle Services [table 4]

Maintenance fees saved (S)	\$17,951,518.00
Gallons of Gas Saved (G)	1,547, 544
Student Use of all Rapid services in 2009 (U)	2,380, 838
Cost per gallon of gas (C)	\$2.65

Cost Saved per rider (X)	\$9.26
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Calculation for Cost Save Per Rider: $X = [S + (G * C)] / U$

Calculation for Price of shuttle service for extended time: Service Total = $P * B * H$, = \$1,121.60

Number of Students needed to meet cost= Service Total/C, =121.12, or 122 students.

Grand Valley State University Libraries, and the Private Donation Fund Board of Trustees, consider the proposal a success, if student savings can account for at least 50 percent of the daily cost for shuttle service. If at least 50 percent can be achieved, it is believed that the student body is sufficiently using the extended service, and the benefits for those using the service will outweigh the expense. Therefore, the number of students using the shuttle service must increase by at least 62 people per day during extended shuttle operation, and the library census must increase by at least 32 people per day, during the extended shuttle operation. Library users would be counted as 2 riders, assuming they would be using the shuttle twice for a round-trip venture.

Conclusion

Equal access to educational opportunities is a basic tenant of the educational mission at Grand Valley State University. The library is the backbone of this institution, and its service should be equally available to all members of the university. This grant proposal seeks to continue that tradition, and extend busing services to all campus students, so they may achieve academic excellence, without compromising economic prosperity, environmental quality, or personal safety. Through the extension of the Rapid shuttle service, equal and affordable access to the library shall be provided to students of the downtown campus, offering academic prosperity for those who earnestly seek it.

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Appendix I: Holdings and Collection Use at GVSU Libraries

HOLDINGS

BOOKS, PERIODICALS &	June 2003	June 2004	June 2005	June 2006	June 2007	June 2008
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DOCUMENTS						
Cataloged Materials	400,556	427,272	441,811	451,090	464,610	468,231
E Books (est.)	8,117	8,267	30,000	30,000	150,000	479,734
Bound Periodical Vol.	107,973	112,020	115,784	112,706	114,938	111,426
U.S. Documents	116,799	116,240	115,662	114,692	114,477	114,028
TOTAL VOLUMES	633,445	663,799	703,257	708,488	844,025	1,173,419
% Increase	---	4.8%	5.9%	0.7%	19.1%	39.0%
Current Periodical Subscriptions						
Paper and Micro	3,877	3,963	3,582	2,713	2,626	1,775
Electronic	7,200	8,000	17,682	34,314	71,133	44,000
Electronic Databases (est.)	na	na	200	200	250	350
NONBOOK MATERIAL						
Microforms (film & reel)	838,180	852,646	859,693	866,712	868,860	871,377
Maps	62,187	62,711	62,832	62,350	61,929	61,732
Sound Recordings	14,918	15,014	15,202	14,908	14,691	14,757
Film & Video	3,086	3,472	3,751	4,197	5,113	5,676
Computer Files	4,293	4,491	4,812	4,958	5,114	5,149
Internet Resources	668	864	2,471	2,549	4,344	4,755
Other Library Materials—kits, etc.	5,192	5,241	5,309	5,362	5,736	6,039
TOTAL NONBOOK MATERIALS	928,524	944,439	954,070	961,036	965,787	969,485
Total Holdings	1,573,046	1,620,201	1,678,791	1,706,751	1,883,821	2,189,029
% Increase						
University Archives <i># volumes counted 2003 & 2004 began cubic feet measurement in 2006</i>	46,789	47,307	1020	1055	964	998
Regional Historical Collections	na	na	849	999	1,194	1,229

COLLECTION USE

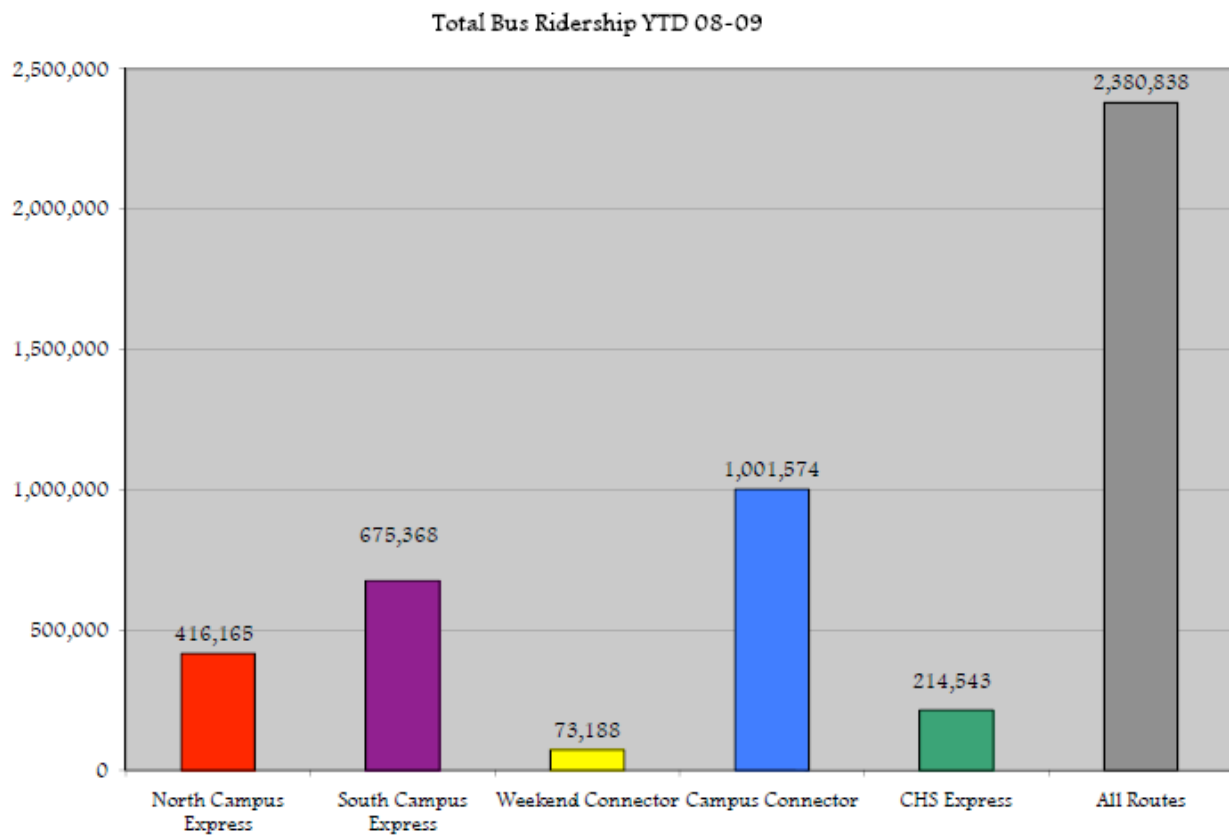
	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
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Volumes Circulated	93,108	94,727	86,701	96,850	110,653	113,995
Interlibrary Loan	23,104	21,031	21,639	20,537	25,330	30,442
Instructional Presentations	497	542	581	365	504	412
Presentation Attendees	11,720	13,180	14,691	10,464	13,038	9,974
Reference Transactions	40,893	37,410	41,778	29,402	28,814	27,013
<i>calendar year</i>				2005	2007	2008
Hits to the website				10,191,762	23,394,777	
BUILDING USE	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Zumberge	202,287	201,043	213,145	252,832	337,680	386,809
Steelcase (est.)	105,936	105,284	117,386	105,000	108,836	167,193
Curriculum Materials Library - DeVos (as of 2007) <i>(KCRC prior to 2007)</i>	8,539	8,270	8,996	7,500	5,000	---
Frey Foundation Learning Center	na	12,885	21,954	26,466	79,438	95,485
Total Building Use	316,762	327,482	361,481	332,198	530,954	649,487

Courtesy of <http://www.gvsu.edu/library/index.cfm?id=0425DFC4-C310-52E7-983E01BB2D65470F>

Appendix II Total Ridership 2008-09

5/28/2009



courtesy of <http://www.gvsu.edu/forms/bus/Graph%20-%20Yearly%20Ridership%2008-09%20printed%205282009.pdf>