



The USC's Guide To The Mustang Express

Introduction

The Mustang Express is a service provided by the University Students' Council at Western University to ensure that students have safe and reliable access to transit late at night when London buses have stopped running. The purpose of this report is to detail the initiative, review its operations and increase understanding of how it functions.

Mustang Express Service Model

The Mustang Express was brought forward as an initiative from the 2010-2011 USC Executive. In February 2011, students were asked through a referendum if they would be willing to support a student fee increase to pay for the service. Students voted in favour of the fee, and the shuttle service has been running every year since.

The schedule operates from September 10 to December 5 and again from January 7 to April 2 (exact dates fluctuate slightly based on the academic calendar). Running on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings – as well as every third Wednesday of a month - the service is funded through an annual student fee of \$12.50. Students board the shuttle by presenting a valid Western student card featuring a reflective "Mustang Express" sticker. These stickers are issued to full-time students alongside the London Transit Commission bus passes in beginning of each new school year. Part-time students can get their sticker from Mustang Central in the University Community Centre (UCC).

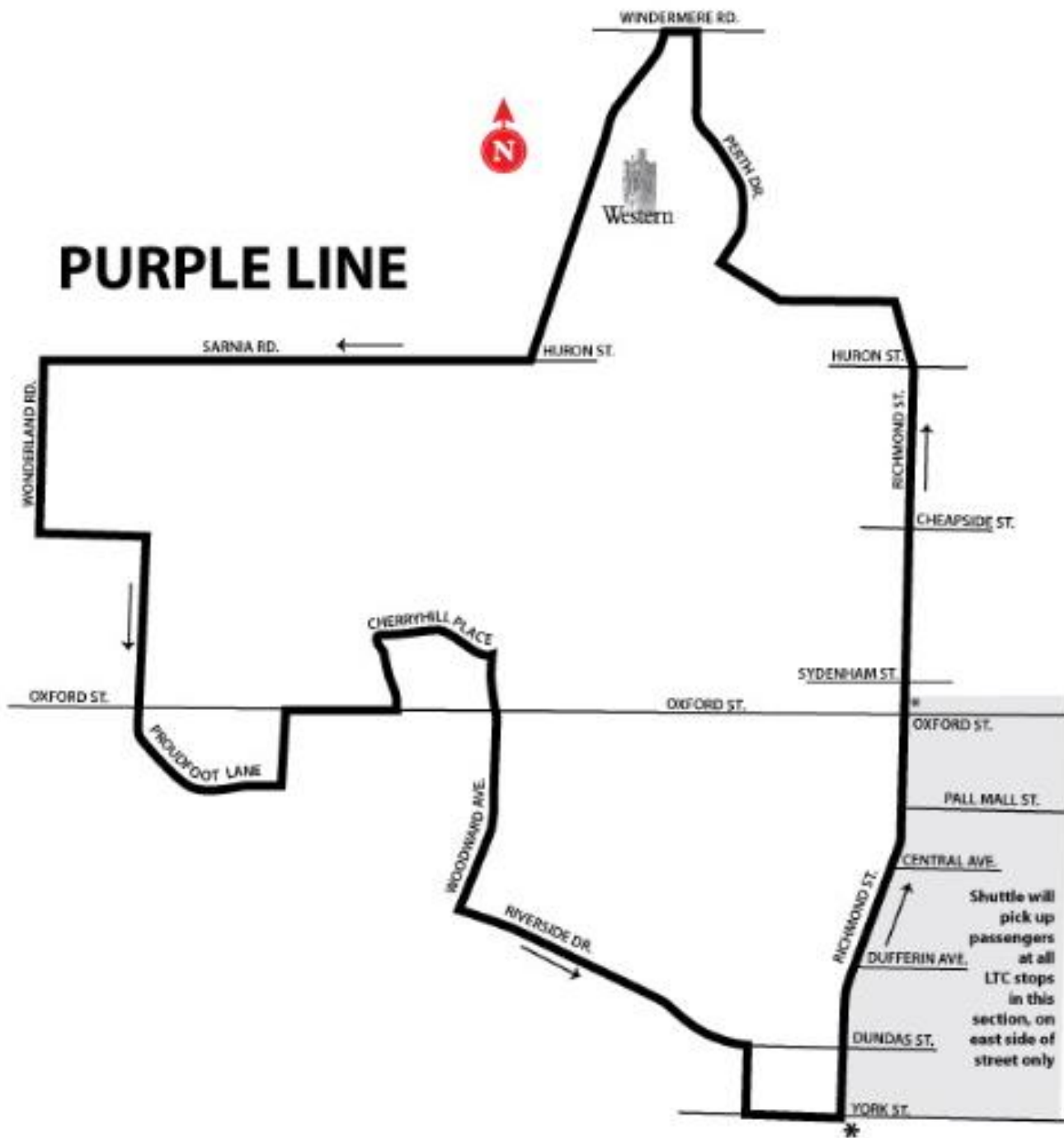


The shuttle will stop to pick up passengers at LTC stops along Richmond Street and proceed to drop students off at major intersections across residential areas that surround the university. There are currently two routes in place, The Silver Line and The Purple Line. Both have staggering start times: 3 buses begin their routes at 12:00 a.m. and 3 more begin at 12:30 a.m. The service stops picking up new passengers just before 3 A.M. The maps on the second and third page depict the two available routes.

Exam Shuttle Service Model

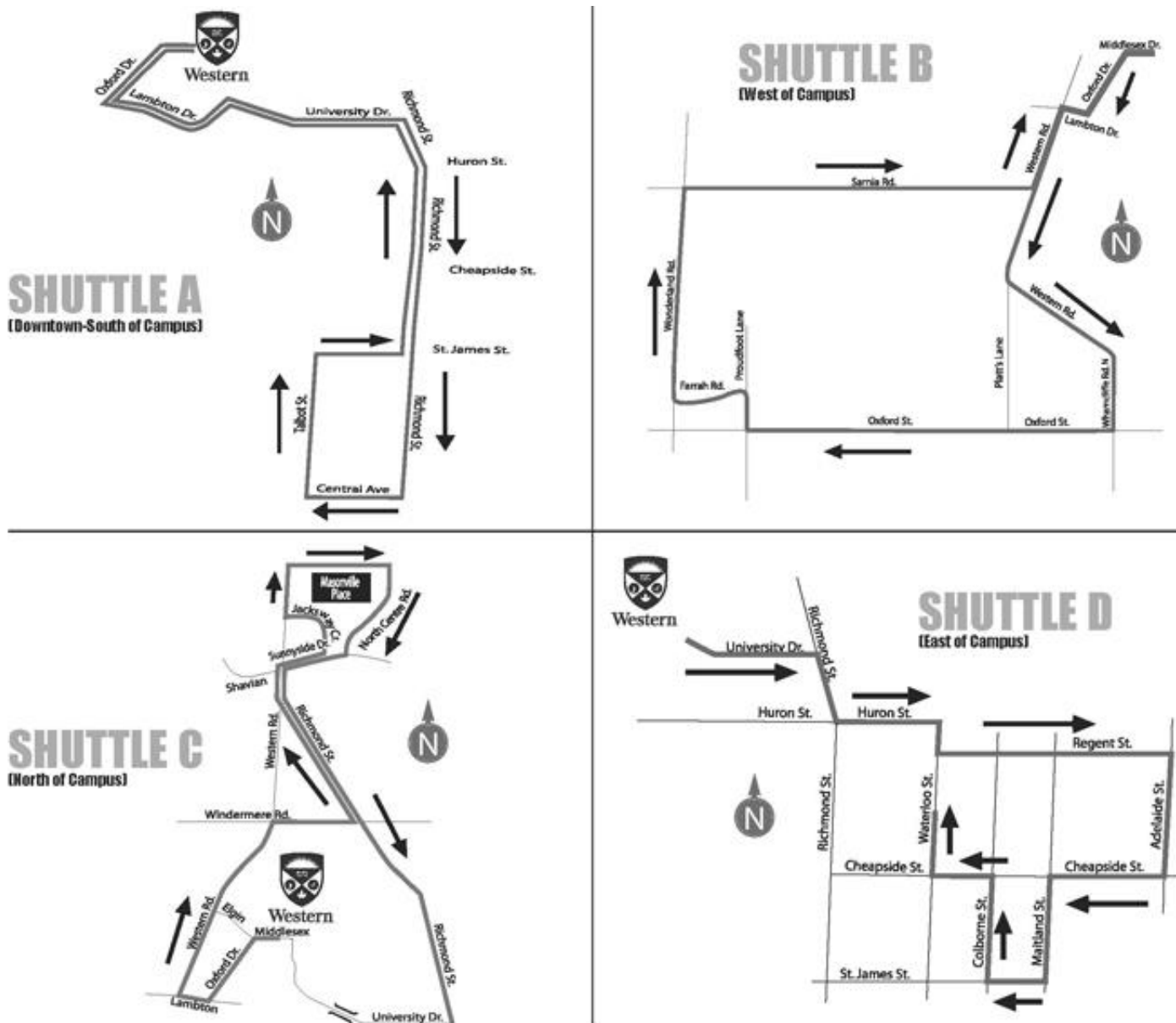
Even older than the Mustang Express is the Exam Shuttle Bus service, running for almost 15 years by the USC in partnership with Robert Q Travel and Airbus Services. These shuttles take students home from Weldon Library every half hour between 12:30 a.m. and 4 a.m. from December 10-18, and between 12:30 a.m. and 2:00 a.m. from December 19-21. These buses will also run during the April exam period, from April 8th to 29th, with similar times. This is intended to ensure that students get home safely during periods they are more likely to stay late on campus and when London buses stop running. Pickup takes place at Oxford Drive. Shuttles cover the four routes shown on the fourth page.

Mustang Express Routes





Exam Shuttle Routes



Mustang Express Usage Details

The USC continues to track and record the shuttle's usage. On average, the service attracts 7,500 riders in the first term and 6,800 in the second for an annual average of 14,300 over the past four years. With an annual cost of \$218,338, this expenditure is justified to ensure these students have a consistent and safe trip home. Additionally, since the service has been implemented the university has received less complaints from London community members about late-night, downtown disruptions.

Shrinking Our Ecological Footprint: Voyageur's Green Initiatives

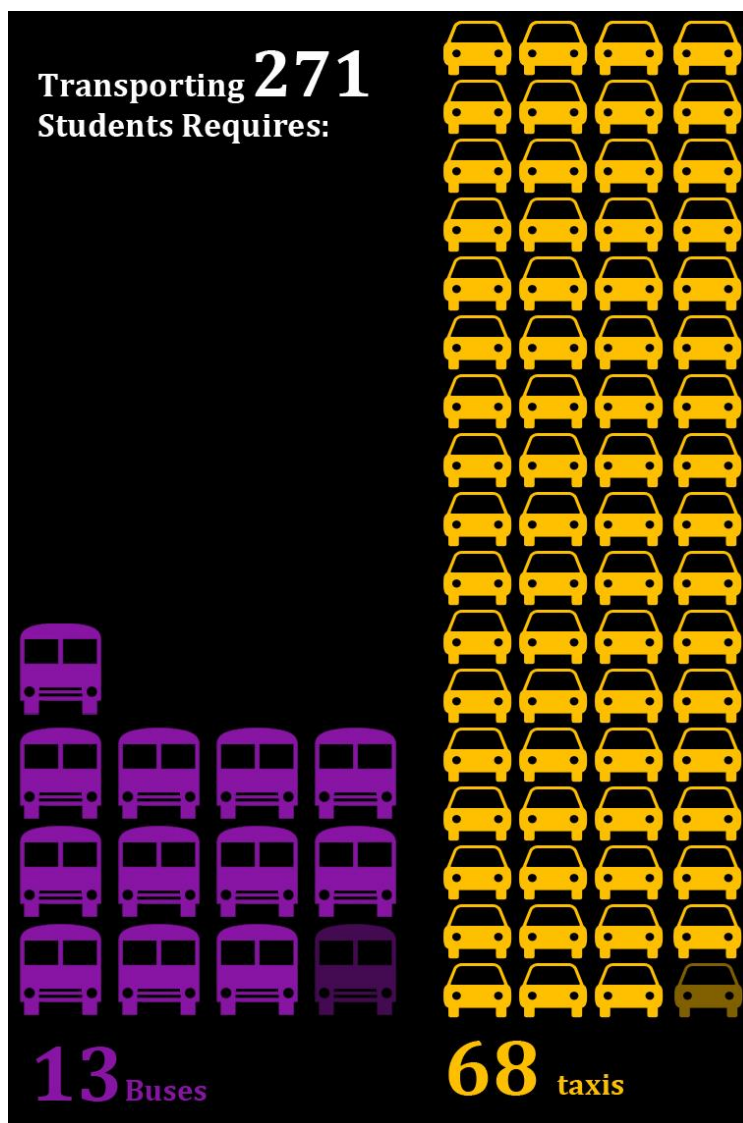
The Mustang Express is operated by Voyageur, a company known for its excellence in environmentalism. In addition to regular inspections and maintenance of vehicles for best performance, the company fits its vehicles with low rolling resistance tires that increase fuel efficiency. Additionally, they use a tire retread program which lowers the number of necessary tire replacements by 500 every three years. The retreading of one tire only requires seven gallons of oil, while manufacturing a new one requires approximately 22. Voyageur also uses high quality lubricants and enriched fuels that have been proven to minimize the environmental impact of vehicles. Finally, Voyageur partakes in a number of recycling and waste reduction initiatives for its containers, reusable aerosols and shipping process. Five of the six Mustang Express vehicles currently operate on gasoline, while only one continues to run on Diesel.

Shrinking Our Ecological Footprint: Less Vehicles on the Road

Equally significant is the amount of vehicle emissions that shared transportation reduces. By riding the Mustang Express, students no longer require taxis and personal vehicles to get to and from downtown London late at night.

Given that the annual ridership for the service is 14,300 people, it only takes 650 bus trips to transport these students home*. However, if these students take personal vehicles or taxis then it would require 3575 trips*. On a typical Saturday evening in the 2014/2015 school year, the ridership of the Mustang Express averaged at 271 people. The graphic on the right compares the number of required vehicles to transport these students using buses instead of taxi cabs.

Paired with Voyageur's excellence in ecological friendliness, this reduction in vehicles on the road makes the Mustang Express one of the USC's many green initiatives.



*if vehicles are at full ridership capacity

Looking Forward: The Future of the Mustang Express

The USC is interested in reviewing all of its services in order to maximize both efficiency and utility to students. This involves regularly reviewing routes and making minor adjustments. A recent addition was the signage on the Mustang Express indicating what bus it is and notifying riders which route each particular bus was taking. The USC is currently exploring the possibility of adding a new route and additional service. Finally, work is underway to offer Mustang Express services for students from campus to major residential areas after on-campus events including Charity Ball, Soph Pubs, and Frost Week events. Student feedback in regards to the service is always welcome.

Questions?

More about the Mustang Express can be found here:

www.westernusc.ca/transportation/

Questions and concerns can be directed to:

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