



**PHOTO, 4B**  
Dogs take over the ballpark

## Park, pray, pay: the reality of campus parking

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A&E AND LIFE EDITOR

As Arkansas State University continues to admit more students each year, the need for sufficient parking spaces, clearly designated lots and transparency grows.

### The dreaded yellow slip

As a college with more than 3,200 students living on campus and thousands more commuting each day, A-State is sure to give out a few parking tickets. Students complain that they struggle to interpret parking signs, and there's the annual debate about whether there are enough parking spots on campus.

During any given week, parking operations officers, along with the University Police Department, issue between 100 and 500 citations. "Failure to display a permit" and "unauthorized zone" are the most commonly issued citations. These violations cost students \$30, according to the A-State website.

Erin Bryan, a first-year fashion merchandising and marketing major from Jonesboro, who lives on campus, said she received a warning for parking in an unauthorized space, even though the differences between the spaces were not easily identifiable.

"The ticket was in the visitor's parking lot by the Welcome Center, where I had to park my rental car while mine was in the shop," Bryan said. "Signs were not clearly distinguishable between which spots were actual visitors' and which were faculty, so I ended up parked in a faculty spot by accident."

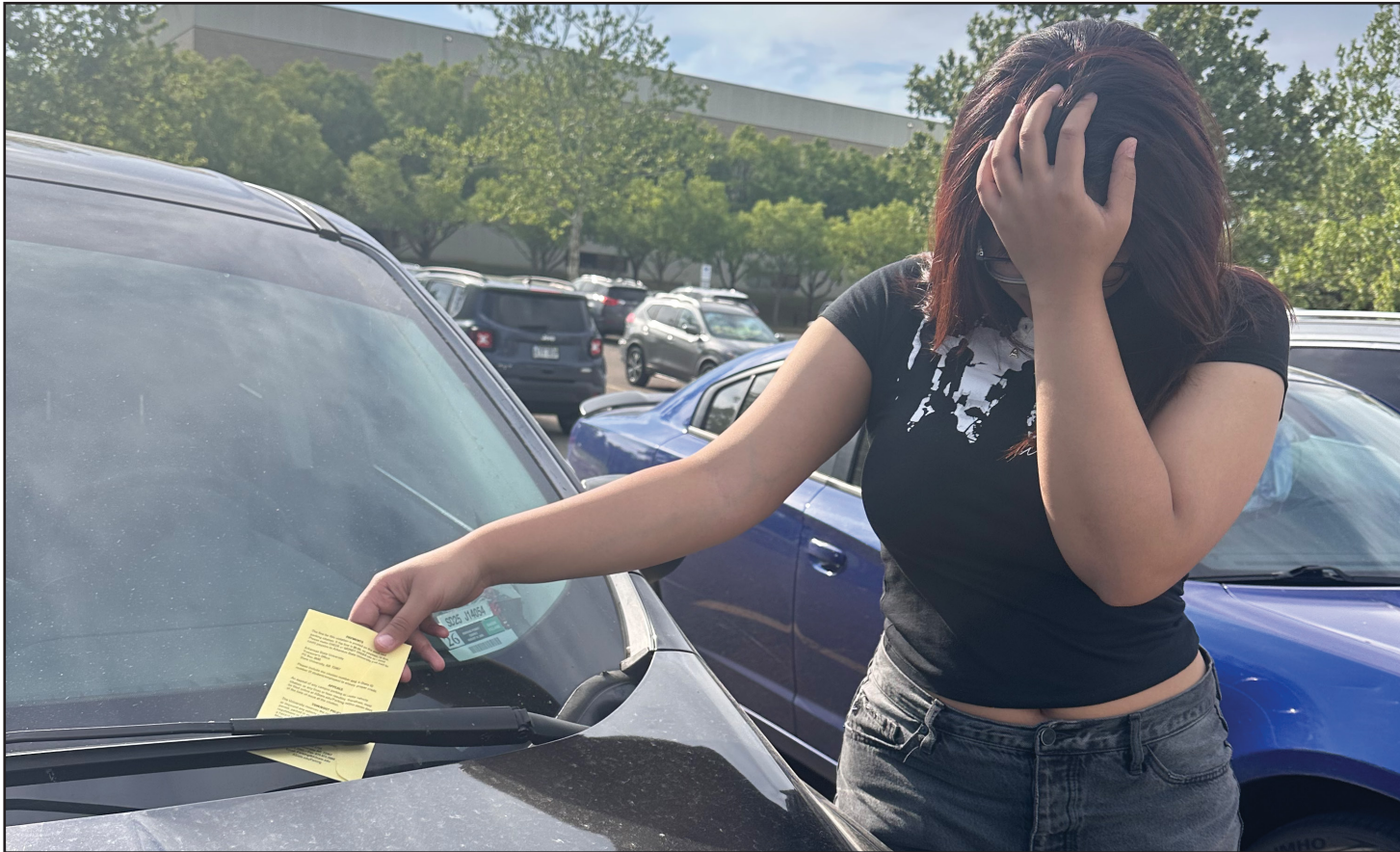


Photo illustration by Allie Carson | News Editor

A distressed student finds a parking ticket on their car in the Education/Communication building parking lot. Dave McKinney, director of parking services, said parking operations officers and the University Police Department serve between 100 and 500 citations a week.

Other students receive more than warnings, facing fines of more than \$300.

Nathan Johnson, a senior exercise science major from Concord, Arkansas, received tickets adding up to \$360 for parking in a visitor lot after he left his parking pass at home.

"It's expensive, it's unforgiving, it's awful. Respectfully," Johnson said.

Dave McKinney, director of parking services, said students do not face a parking issue and there shouldn't be a reason for students to park in a visitor lot.

"There is never a point during the business day or after hours that parking is not available for

either resident or commuter students," McKinney said. "At any point during the day, several hundred spaces remain open and available for students."

McKinney said the peak parking hours on campus are between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

"(During the peak parking period) the parking spaces closest to the campus inner core are nearly full. However, several hundred parking spaces remain available in the outer core," McKinney said.

Parking Services also looks at what other campuses are doing when determining parking violation fines. Based on this, McKinney said they try to set the cost of fines close to what would be normal for a college the size of A-State.

At the University of Central Arkansas, a "failure to display a parking permit" costs \$15. Students at Arkansas Tech University pay \$75 for "failure to display a current hangtag." UALR's commuter students receive a \$25 fine for "parking without a permit." And at the University of Arkansas, parking in a lot or space "not authorized by permit" results in a \$75 fine.

### Follow the money

In a 16-week semester, the two most commonly issued citations, each costing students \$30, at a minimum rate of 100 citations a day, will earn Parking Services \$48,000.

Parking Services is considered auxiliary, meaning revenue from parking fines goes back into the university's infrastructure. Craig Johnson, assistant vice chancellor for auxiliary services, said this money pays for things like infrastructure maintenance and parking customer service.

"Maintenance includes parking lot signage, lighting, painting, striping, entrance/exit gates, and surface repairs.



Photo by Amelia Young | A&E and Life Editor

A parking operations officer takes a picture of a license plate near the Living Learning Communities residence halls. Craig Johnson, assistant vice chancellor for auxiliary services, said money generated from parking fines pays for campus infrastructure.

Customer services include former Arkansas Technical School property into a parking lot to accommodate more students on campus. McKinney said perceived parking strains will enjoy some relief when the College of Veterinary Medicine building finishes construction by the fall semester. Then, McKinney said, both the large commuter parking lot south of Pack Place and the parallel parking on Cherokee Street south of Pack Place will reopen to student parking.

Johnson said that prioritizing and funding parking projects is a mutual effort that includes Parking Services, Facilities Management, and the Office of Finance/Administration.

### Parking unlocked

Parking isn't unique to A-State; university students around the country face similar issues.

Some institutions are implementing changes to address parking issues. For instance, Arkansas Tech University plans to turn the

former Arkansas Technical School property into a parking lot to accommodate more students on campus. McKinney said perceived parking strains will enjoy some relief when the College of Veterinary Medicine building finishes construction by the fall semester. Then, McKinney said, both the large commuter parking lot south of Pack Place and the parallel parking on Cherokee Street south of Pack Place will reopen to student parking.

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Only **eight** days until the last day of class!

Thursday, April 30 is the last day of spring classes. Friday, May 1, is dead day. Use this time to catch up on work and study for final exams!

The schedule for final exam week, May 4 through May 8, may be found by scanning the QR code below:



**Earth Day observed today**

Several university clubs and committees will be at the Heritage Plaza Lawn from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. today to share their work improving the environment.

**Blackout poetry scheduled Thursday**

The Dean B. Ellis and Writing Center are hosting a poetry event and contest from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. on the library's second floor. The event features speakers from the Tributary and graduate assistants from the Writing Center.

BRIEFS COURTESY OF A-STATE CAMPUS CALENDAR

**THIS WEEK IN THE HERALD:**

### OPINION, 2A

- Editor-in-chief, A&E and life editor reflect on college in their last print edition

### NEWS, 3A

- Runnin', howlin', barkin' at the park
- Students present research and creativity at Create@State
- Festival of Flowers blooms across Jonesboro

### LIFE, 4A

- A helper at heart: counselor cares beyond classroom
- Student Speaks
- Students go wild at Aux Cord Wars

### ARTS & E, 1B

- "Leading Ladies" steals fame and fortune
- Top pop-culture moments of 2026 (so far)
- The return of dystopia

### SPORTS, 2B

- The definition and heart of A-State's brand of football: Corey Rucker Jr.
- UCA pitching woes give A-State season high 16 run inning

