

Transportation & Sustainability at College of the Atlantic

Information compiled February 2015

GENERAL INFORMATION:

COA is located on a bridged island which it shares with Acadia National Park. It is a rural area with a vibrant tourist season. Public transportation consists of the Island Explorer bus system which runs for 4 months each year during the tourist season. This is a free, propane powered bus system with several bus routes across the island. The buses are equipped with bike racks for riders to bring their bikes with stops at the college and in downtown Bar Harbor where many students, staff and faculty live.

Downeast Transportation provides year-round bus service to Ellsworth and Bangor for extended shopping opportunities and to Bangor for bus service to Boston as well as to the International Bangor airport.

Most students not living on campus rent in town within walking distance to campus. Many students bike or walk to school. To reduce our carbon output and to ensure safety, COA provides a night bus, and a day bus to take students around on snowy days or late nights.

A Ford Focus Electric Vehicle provided by the college is dedicated to student travel for independent studies, internships, or senior projects. The college also owns an all-electric van used to transport students, both classes and works study to and from the college's two farms located in neighboring towns. The electric vehicles are charged at solar charging stations located on campus and at each of the two farms owned by the college

Students are very conscious about carpooling when they do drive, whether on the island or to and from home during term breaks. Frequent email communication through the community email facilitates this carpooling

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC'S FLEET:

The college purchased a 1992 all-electric passenger van that is used to transport students to and from the colleges' two working farms where the students work as volunteers or through work study. It was purchased under a grant for Beech Hill Farm and is therefore dedicated for farm transportation. It is also used to haul produce to the campus from Beech Hill Farm. The van is maintained by work study students. The college, in April 2014, received an all-electric Ford Focus sedan as a result of our close working relationship with Darling's Ford of Bangor, Maine. The is vehicle is recharged at the college's on-campus Level 2 charging station, which is directly attached to a solar PV system as well as the grid. Peggy Rockefeller Farms has a 1996 Ford F250 super cab 4X4 diesel pickup truck that is run on a mixture of diesel and biodiesel fuel. There is an electric car charger at each of the college's two farms and on campus. All three are tied to a solar pv array.

STUDENT COMMUTES:

We undertook two surveys of commuting of COA community members: one in 2006 and another in 2011. The estimates (80% of student body walk or ride bikes) regarding commuting are based on both surveys and are a good representation of modes of commuting. The surveys were done to provide information on student, staff and faculty member commuting for the Clean Air--Cool Planet carbon calculator. A little less than half of our 360 students live on campus (about 150), so they primarily walk,

although some have cars. The other half live mostly within walking distance of the campus, since Bar Harbor has a small business district with apartments students rent. We have a night bus and a day bus to shuttle students to and from downtown Bar Harbor. Although we don't have ridership information, it is very well used.

SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION:

COA has two covered bike storage buildings nearby student residences and bike racks around campus. We also have a bike repair shed where students salvage parts from bikes to create loaner bikes for anyone on campus who wants one. They also do repairs for students' personal bikes. Students who commute from off campus usually only have a ride of 2 miles or less from in-town apartments, so the need for a shower after commuting to campus is not that important but there are shower facilities available. On campus there is a good network of blacktop roads and sand and gravel paths that are suitable and safe for bicycle use.

Not every non-residential building has a bike rack within 50 feet, but as it is not necessary to lock your bicycle, students can park their bikes outside of any building. Long term storage is available at two covered storage facilities, which are within 330 feet of all residence halls. Because our campus is so small, students typically bike to campus and then leave their bicycles at a central location while they walk from building to building.

Since the college first opened in 1969 bikes have been a prominent part of the COA campus. Every student either has a bike or can have access to a community bike to use. We purposely have kept vehicle parking close to Route 3, at the edge of our campus, to keep cars on the campus periphery, to make it a pedestrian and bike-friendly campus. Bikes are everywhere on the COA campus and part of the college culture.

COA's bike program provides a bike for any faculty, staff or student at no cost. Bikes can be borrowed from the community bike repair shed. Currently, all of COA's bikes are older bicycles that have been restored and repaired. The bikes are maintained by a team of COA students working with the Student Life Outdoor Program. All COA community members have access to the bike shed where they can get tools or help with repairs. The Student Life Outdoor Program also offers bike maintenance workshops for community members. 15 bikes are available for loan at any one time. Any student who wants a bike can assemble one them self from an older bike or get help doing so from the volunteer bike program students.

COA students, in collaboration with the campus' buildings and grounds office, operates a public transportation option, known as the "night bus" and the "day bus". COA's night bus runs from 6:30 PM to 11:30 PM, stopping at campus every half hour, and circulating through various planned locations in Bar Harbor. During the winter, the day bus does three runs per day. The buses cuts down on individual car traffic and provides an alternate to walking and riding bikes at night.