

# Sharing the road

thebattalion

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## **In times of peak traffic, keep aware of cyclists and pedestrians alike.**

As the semester starts there are more bicycles and autos on the road, and bicycles and pedestrians on the sidewalks on campus. The increase in traffic makes tempers flare. Let's all keep our cool, obey traffic laws, and treat each other with courtesy and respect.

Distracted drivers, pedestrians and cyclists are a major concern.

Please leave the cell phone calls for after the car or bike is parked, and when you are not walking around in a big crowd. A second of inattention can result in great misfortunes.

Cyclists fare best when they act and are treated as the drivers of vehicles. Bicycles are vehicles under Texas law, with all of the rights and responsibilities therein. Drive a bike like you would drive a slow moving car, ride with traffic, obey traffic laws, signal your intent. This is the best way to stay safe.

A lot of cyclists on campus use the sidewalks. This is dangerous both for the cyclist and the pedestrian. If you must use the sidewalk, keep your speed down to pedestrian speed, and pay extra attention.

Motorists are not trained to look for traffic coming from sidewalks.

This makes sidewalk cycling more dangerous than riding in the road.

Cyclists need to use lights at night in order to be seen.

Motorists need to leave extra room while passing. Change lanes to pass. Wait until it is safe to pass.

Cyclists ride on the right but need to leave a safety margin rather than riding a few inches from the curb. Debris, potholes and glass in the road are hazardous to bicycles. This forces cyclists to move further to the left.

These same hazards are often present in bike lanes, forcing cyclists to ride left of the bike lane. Cyclists can see hazards that motorists cannot.

Cyclists also need to stay out of the door zone of parked cars, approximately 3 feet to the left of the automobile.

The biggest danger areas for collisions are intersections and driveways. Everyone needs to use extra caution at these locations and think ahead to anticipate the most common cyclist and motorist mistakes.

Motorists, be prepared for cyclist mistakes, but do not encourage them. Cyclists appreciate motorist courtesy, but do not disrupt the normal flow of traffic, if you do so you are risking a collision with other motorists.

Cyclists need to choose the correct lane. Right-turn- only lanes are for turning right, not for proceeding straight. To make a left turn, merge to the left. If cyclists can't merge to the left, cyclists have the option of making a left turn as a pedestrian, first crossing the street in one direction, then in another. This is much safer than trying to cheat and turn from the right hand side of the road.

Cyclists, if you are afraid to ride in traffic, remember that 99.99 percent of all motorists, maybe more, are doing their best to look out for us and take good care of us, but that 0.01 percent is a lot easier to notice.

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