

# How Many People Use the Safe Ride Van? Spoiler Alert: More Than You Think!

Trinity Watson

Department of English, Old Dominion University

English 211C: Writing, Rhetoric and Research

Ms. Bauers

April 10, 2025

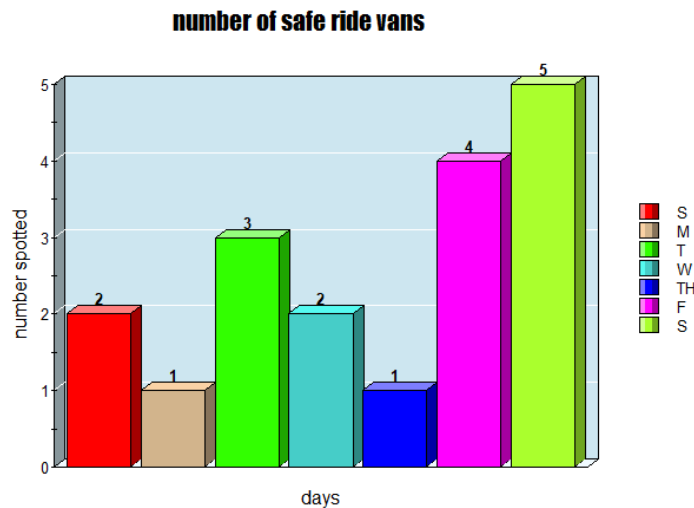
A week-long stakeout of the always on the move Safe Ride vans at Old Dominion University, where they seem to appear only when you least need them. Lately, I've been spotting more Safe Ride vans than actual students on campus, so naturally, I took it upon myself to conduct a highly scientific observation because who needs homework when you can count vans? I cautiously noted how many people disembarked from these chariots of safety, all in an effort to estimate the top notch of students who actually use them. After all, these vans are not just boosted shuttles, they're the ultimate status symbol for those who prioritize safety and accessibility because nothing screams "I care about my well-being" like a ride that shows up only when you're already halfway home!

### **Crafty Method**

To conduct my groundbreaking observational study, I used the highly sophisticated method of... well, just staring at the Safe Ride vans like a hawk around noon everyday outside my dorm with my caffeine addiction. Through this extremely fascinating observation, I gathered "real-time data" on how often these vans are utilized. spoiler alert: not often, and where they're most needed, which is apparently anywhere but where students actually are. I even took the time to eavesdrop on the once again extremely interesting conversations between drivers and students, because who wouldn't want to hear about the latest gossip while waiting for a ride that may or may not show up? A jaw-dropping number of Safe Ride vans, 18, to be exact! That's right, folks, 18 vans roaming the campus like lost puppies as shown in figure 1, desperately searching for students who might actually want a ride. It's almost as if these vans are playing hide-and-seek, but spoiler alert: they're not very good at it, considering they're always parked right where no one is!

**Figure 1**

*Jaw-dropping number of Safe Ride vans throughout the week*



## Shocking Truth

The Safe Ride van at Old Dominion University is like a hope for those who dare to venture out after dark! After a week of intense surveillance, I discovered that a staggering 36 to 54 brave souls actually use this service. With 18 vans spotted, it seems like the real question is are these vans actually transporting students or just serving as mobile lounges for the few who are too cool to walk? Daily usage differs between 5.6% and 27.8%, proving that while students may prioritize their safety, they also prioritize their Netflix binge-watching over a ride home. So, in the grand scheme of campus life, the Safe Ride van is less of a transportation service and more of a trendy accessory used by a select few who want to make a statement: “I could walk, but why not ride in style?” Shown in figure 2.

**Figure 2**

Monday	1	$1/18 \times 100 \approx 5.6\%$
Tuesday	3	$3/18 \times 100 \approx 16.7\%$
Wednesday	2	$2/18 \times 100 \approx 11.1\%$
Thursday	1	$1/18 \times 100 \approx 5.6\%$
Friday	4	$4/18 \times 100 \approx 22.2\%$
Saturday	5	$5/18 \times 100 \approx 27.8\%$
Sunday	2	$2/18 \times 100 \approx 11.1\%$

*Note. Ranges from 5.6% to 27.8% of people riding safe ride vans depending on the day they want to ride in style*

Ah, the biases and errors, those delightful little gremlins that popped up during my oh-so-serious evaluation of the Safe Ride van service for ODU students! It turns out that while I was busy counting vans, a few key issues decided to crash the party, like that one person who shows up uninvited and eats all the snacks. Who knew that observing a transportation service could come with its own set of terrible mistakes, like miscounting the number of vans.

## **Mistakes In The Process**

Let's talk about the biases and errors that turned my observation of the Safe Ride van service into a comedy of errors! First off, the percentage of students using the service ranging

from a laughable 5.6% to a slightly less laughable 27.8% is about as accurate as a weather forecast in a hurricane. Factors like time of day and weather? Please, who knew that students might prefer to walk in the rain rather than risk being seen in a "van service" that screams, "I'm too cool for a regular ride!" And let's not forget the classic bias of availability. If the vans don't go where the party is, good luck finding a student who'll use them! Then there's the perception of safety; apparently, some students would rather take their chances with a late-night stroll than face the judgment of their peers for hopping into a van. Oh, and the day of the week? Forget it! Weekends are like a van party, while weekdays are a ghost town. Good luck trying to make sense of that data! Finally, if there aren't enough vans or drivers on busy nights, students might as well just start a conga line home, because waiting for a ride is so last season. Understanding these biases is crucial, but let's be real, it's all just part of the hilariously chaotic ride that is campus life! Awareness issues? Perhaps students are too busy perfecting their TikTok dances to notice the vans.

## **World Changing Information**

This research is absolutely crucial for determining how many brave souls are using the ODU Safe Ride van because clearly, the fate of campus safety hinges on whether 10 or 100 students decide to hitch a ride! First off, we need to estimate the demand for this "life-saving" service, which is basically just a glorified shuttle for students who can't be bothered to walk. If the usage rates of the vans are high, it means students are making "safe choices" or maybe they just really love the thrill of being crammed into a van with strangers at 2 AM! Low usage rates? Oh, that's just a sign that we need to throw more flyers around like confetti and hope students magically become aware of the service. Analyzing when the vans are used might reveal patterns, like how students only remember they exist during finals week or when it's

raining cats and dogs. Lastly, let's not forget the plan to conduct a demographics and behavior survey because nothing says "I care about your safety" like a questionnaire that'll probably end up in the recycling bin! All in all, this research will surely create a safer, more supportive environment right after we figure out how to convince students that riding in a van isn't the same as being picked up by their mom!