Ratio to ratio, Piedmont parking spaces don’t add up

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Currently being used for contracted vehicles, the parking lot between Nieslen Hall and the Graduate Admissions Office is nearly completely fenced off. Students are allowed to walk through the restricted area but are not allowed to park in the student lot. Students were made aware of this issue with a short, strict email from Assistant Director of Residential Living, Charlotte Davenport.

“We have received the following message from Administrative Services,” the email read. “As we prepare to begin the Renovation of Nielsen Hall, we will be closing the Parking Lot between Nielson Hall and Graduate Admissions on January 15th. Parking will be for contractor vehicles only. We apologize for the inconvenience and appreciate your cooperation.”

Understandably, the Education department needs their own space rather than being stuffed on the bottom floor of the library. However, in the midst of a snowy, cold, sickly, wet, windy winter, students should not be coerced to walk to class with the removal of one of the two student lots surrounding the quad. Students already have to fight for spots that are first-come, first-serve. Parking at Piedmont is already a hot topic among students and is known for being a weakness the school possesses. With over double the amount of parking spaces as students, faculty and staff have priority with a large number of spaces available – yet, Piedmont brags about their student to faculty ratio.

Before the Nielsen lot was shut down, there was a total of 39 parking spaces available for students around the quad (including handicap spots) - now there are 19. There are 203 spaces available for faculty and staff. Over 80 percent of parking is red lots. Piedmont has an 11-one ratio for students to faculty and had a ratio of one-five for parking spaces before Nielsen closed. Now the ratio is one-11. Piedmont student parking has been cut in half (around the quad) due to the closure of the Nielsen lot and nothing has been done about it.

Knowing there is no quick fix to the parking issue at Piedmont, some sort of accommodation is warranted. Faculty and staff are living in parking luxury as students are being thanked for their cooperation and fighting over 19 parking spots. The least Piedmont could do is open some of the red lots to students to apologize for the inconvenience and inequality.