

Statement of the Problem: International Student Car Rental System

Background

International students in the U.S. face significant transportation challenges. Unlike local students, they typically do not own a car and must rely on expensive traditional rental services, limited public transportation, or costly ridesharing.

Many students consider buying a low-cost used car, but this presents several risks:

- Unexpected repair costs due to unreliable vehicles.
- Complex registration and insurance requirements.
- Difficulty in reselling the car when relocating to another state or city.

Traditional car rental companies also impose strict eligibility criteria, requiring a U.S. credit history, Social Security Number (SSN), and high security deposits, making it nearly impossible for international students to rent a vehicle. Additionally, to legally drive, students must obtain a U.S. driver's license, but many struggle to find affordable cars for driving practice and DMV tests.

Problem Definition

Currently, there is no dedicated car rental solution tailored to international students. The existing options present several key challenges:

- High Costs & Inflexible Rental Terms
 - Traditional car rental companies charge daily rates, making them too expensive for students who need long-term rentals.
 - Students who buy used cars often face unexpected maintenance costs, and reselling a car when moving is inconvenient and may lead to financial loss.
- Strict Eligibility Requirements
 - Most rental companies require a U.S. credit card, driver's license, and SSN, which many international students do not have.
 - Without a U.S. driving history, insurance costs are high, making renting even more expensive.
- Challenges in Obtaining a U.S. Driver's License
 - International students must pass a driving test but often lack proper guidance on DMV procedures.
 - Renting a car for driving practice is difficult due to insurance restrictions and high costs.

- Lack of Maintenance & Support
- Students who purchase used cars often struggle with repairs and maintenance, leading to additional unexpected costs.
- No rental service currently provides integrated repair and maintenance support for students.

Repair & Maintenance Policy

To address concerns about car maintenance costs, the service will provide:

1 ****Two options for handling car issues:****

- ****Option 1:**** Students can request a repair/maintenance service, and depending on the issue, either they or the provider covers the cost.
- ****Option 2:**** Students can swap the damaged car for another vehicle, avoiding repair costs.

2 ****Cost Management Strategies:****

- Include repair costs in the rental price as a built-in maintenance fee.
- Limit free replacements to one or two swaps per semester.
- Partner with repair shops to reduce costs through bulk maintenance contracts.
- Offer an optional insurance package for unlimited swaps and repairs.

Impact of the Problem

If these issues remain unaddressed:

- International students face mobility challenges, affecting their ability to attend classes, internships, and explore the city.
- Students lose money on costly rentals, unexpected repair expenses, or poor resale values when they move.
- Safety concerns arise when students drive unreliable used cars without proper maintenance.

Proposed Solution

To address these challenges, we propose a student-friendly, budget-conscious car rental system designed specifically for international students. This system will provide:

- Affordable Monthly Rentals - Budget-friendly pricing with flexible weekly, monthly, and semester-based rental plans.
- Reliable Used Cars - Older but well-maintained vehicles that are safe for city travel without unnecessary luxury features.
- No U.S. Credit Card or SSN Required - Alternative student-friendly verification options (student ID, passport, international driver's license).
- Driver's License Support - Assistance with DMV procedures, car rentals for driving practice, and test preparation.

- Partnerships with Car Dealers & Repair Shops - Access to affordable rental cars, regular maintenance, and quick repair services.
- Flexible Buy/Sell Option - Students can rent before buying or list their car for rental while waiting to sell.

By implementing this system, international students will have an affordable, reliable, and flexible transportation option, reducing their financial burden and improving their overall study experience in the U.S.