

## **EIU Tobacco-Free Campus Proposal**

### **November 16, 2012**

#### **From: The EIU Tobacco-Free Committee**

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It is generally acknowledged that the health and well-being of students and personnel at EIU is at of primary importance. However, we believe that the current tobacco use policy on campus fails to provide the optimal environment to promote health. Specifically, the provisions of locations on campus designated as “smoking areas” is detrimental to both the smoker and those exposed to second-hand smoke. We therefore strongly believe that it would be in the best interest of both students and staff at EIU to become a tobacco-free campus (no smoking or tobacco use allowed on EIU premises).

**Suggested resolution:** To extend the current smoking policy at Eastern Illinois University to include prohibiting of smoking or use of tobacco products anywhere on campus or in campus-owned facilities.

We address five questions commonly asked regarding becoming a tobacco-free campus:

- A. What is the current tobacco policy at EIU?
- B. What are the reasons for pursuing the status of a tobacco-free campus?
- C. What are the major challenges to the administration in instituting a tobacco-free policy?
- D. What are the suggested steps to be taken to make EIU tobacco- free?
- E. What are the expected consequences of establishing a tobacco-free campus?

#### **A. What is the current tobacco policy at EIU?**

- No tobacco sales or advertising on campus
- Smoking is prohibited
  - in all University facilities
  - in University vehicles
  - in outdoor areas where seating is provided, such as: athletic contests, concerts and other types of entertainment and productions
- Smoking may be permitted
  - in designated outdoor smoking areas adjacent to buildings (not in airlocks or entry ways). Smokers are required to dispose of smoking materials in designated receptacles
    - currently 60 smoking areas exist on campus

## **B. What are the reasons for pursuing the status of a tobacco-free campus?**

### **1. This is primarily a health concern issue:**

At a **university level**, a 2005 survey of EIU students revealed that even **72%** of smokers agree that **secondhand smoking is a legitimate health risk**. Also, **71%** agree that people have a **basic right to breathe smoke-free air**. More recently, in a 2010 survey of EIU students (693 completed surveys), **68%** considered second hand smoke to be an concern or annoyance, **37%** indicated that they had allergies/sensitivities to smoke, and **72%** supported a smoke-free campus.

At a **national level**, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) studies show that tobacco use is responsible for approximately **440,000 premature deaths** each year; that smoking is the single **most preventable cause of death** in America; that tobacco use **shortens lives** of male smokers by an average 13.2 years and females by 14.5 years; that roughly half of today's smokers will die of tobacco related disease; that about **160,000 individuals die** due to lung cancer each year, and that approximately **3000 lung cancer deaths** occur each year among adult nonsmokers in the US as a result of **exposure to secondhand smoke**. Dr. Linda Birnbaum, Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health, made a strong case for going tobacco-free during a presentation on cancer at EIU in fall of 2010.

### **2. To discourage students from starting or increasing smoking or tobacco use habits:**

EIU has a commitment to providing a healthy environment to the both staff and students. Many EIU students start or increase smoking when coming to EIU. According to the 2005 survey of EIU students, **28% are smokers** when coming to EIU, **16% increase smoking**, and **8.6% start smoking**. According to the 2010 EIU Core Alcohol and Drug Survey, approximately 22% of respondents indicated that they began using tobacco after they had turned 18. According to a published report, tobacco use is tightly **correlated with alcohol use** (Ehlinger, 2001), making it even more important to limit smoking. At least among school children, exposure to second-hand smoke is associated with increased school absences (Gilliland et al., 2003). It is likely that similar effects take a toll among college students. Finally, according to the CDC, research shows an increase in influenza infections among non-smokers, and that inhaling secondhand smoke increases an individual's susceptibility to respiratory illnesses.

### **3. Going tobacco-free is a national trend:**

More and more, campuses are moving to becoming tobacco-free.

It appears to be not a matter of "if" but a matter of "when". In Illinois, Southern Illinois University (SIU)-Carbondale moved toward becoming smoke-free in 2001. Since that time, colleges and universities across the US have or are becoming smoke-free or tobacco-free. As recently reported by CNN Health, more than 500 US college campuses

have enacted 100% smoke-free or tobacco-free policies as of July 2011. Notably, 120 of these colleges were added in the last year alone. According to the American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation (<http://www.no-smoke.org>), as of Oct 2010 (223 American universities were completely tobacco free. Although policy enforcement varies from school to school, most prohibit smoking on all campus grounds, including athletic stadiums, restaurants and parking lots. The American College Health Association (ACHA) Position Statement on Tobacco on College and University Campuses statement "encourages colleges and universities to be diligent in their efforts to achieve a 100% indoor and outdoor campus-wide tobacco-free environment." A goal of the U.S. Public Health Service was to reduce the proportion of adults who smoke to below 12% by the year 2010 and to positively influence America's college students to help them remain or become tobacco-free.

EIU has already been making steps in this direction in recent years, largely due to efforts of students. In 1997, Eastern decreased the number of residence hall smoking floors from 28 to 6 (two each in Andrews, Weller and Thomas Halls) due to demand (DEN Nov. 18, 2005). On 10-28-05, the Residence Hall Association (RHA) voted 34-3 in favor of eliminating the two smoking floors in Andrews Hall (DEN Oct. 28, 2005) and by Fall of 2007, the RHA was anticipating that all of the residence halls will be smoke-free (DEN Nov. 18, 2205). However, senate bill SB2465 which "prohibits smoking in any portion of a building used in whole or in part as a student dormitory that is owned and operated or otherwise utilized by a public or private institution of higher education" passed the senate 50-5 and the house 85-25 and became state law, all residence halls at state-supported schools, including EIU, became smoke-free as of May 2006. Currently, smoking is not allowed in University Court (568 students) and University Apartments (154 students). EIU is in a position to be recognized as a leader rather on this issue than a follower both in the state and in our community.

### **C. What are the major challenges to the administration in instituting a tobacco-free policy?**

#### **1. Will going tobacco-free be financially costly to EIU?**

All available studies suggest that there is **no negative financial impact**. From a recent study of universities that became smoke-free, campus personnel did not report student and alumni resistance, changes in personnel workloads or an increased financial burden. In addition, the implementation of smoke-free residence halls imposed little economic burden on the study universities (Gerson et al). Also, this study reported decreased damage to residence hall buildings, decreased fire alarms, decreased incidence of student roommate conflicts, improved student retention, and improved policy enforcement. Also, implementation of smoke-free residence halls imposed little economic burden on the study universities.

Information from other universities actually **suggest a cost benefit**. School officials at Pennsylvania State University reported that 13 landscapers spend 10 hours a week picking up discarded cigarettes at a cost of \$150,000 (Philadelphia Daily News, March 27, 2000). From another report, Marshall University in Huntington said that a conservative estimate

would be at least \$30,000 is spent by his department alone picking up cigarettes and other litter. (Gerson et al.). These studies suggest that going tobacco-free will not pose a financial burden on EIU.

Besides health problems associated with smoking, **national data** provides additional justification for limiting smoking. The CDC estimates an annual cost of more than **\$75 billion** in direct medical costs due to smoking-related illness. A NLSY79 (a national multi-decade longitudinal survey) large scale study of Americans over the past 20 years had shown that the **net worth of nonsmokers** is nearly **50% higher** than that of light smokers and double that of heavy smokers, with the wealth gap increasing by ~\$410 for each year that a person continues to smoke.

## **2. Will there be a good deal of resistance to becoming tobacco-free?**

Resistance to becoming tobacco-free will likely be both **modest and short-lived**. At the University of Kentucky, with one of the highest smoking rates in the country, only a few protests the day of the policy launch were noted, followed by the lack of a need for strict enforcement. Changing a social norm does not occur overnight. A good example is the implementation of safely belt usage laws in the late 80's and early 90's. It appears that once the policy is in place, it is generally accepted to be policy. Indeed, strong student support already exists for making EIU smoke-free, even among smokers.

In 2006, several of the governing bodies on EIU's campus were presented with information on this topic. Each body subsequently voted on whether EIU should become completely smoke-free (no smoking on EIU property). The results were as follows:

- Faculty senate- 10-17-06
  - YES- 11; NO-1; ABSTAIN-3 (To be smoke free by Jan 2008)
- CUBP- 10-20-06
  - YES- 15; NO-0; ABSTAIN-12
- Student senate 11-2-06
  - Did not vote on original issue
    - Subsequent motion to *reject* policy YES- 17; NO-2; ABSTAIN-8
- Civil Service council- 12-6-06
  - Voted to support policy ( Not provided with actual tally)-
    - 33 positive comments to 14 negative comments from list of comments generated by Civil Service Council
- Staff senate- voted in favor of smoke-free on 4-16-07 (not provided with tally)

Thus, in 2006, each governing body, with the exception of the student senate, approved of a smoke-free campus policy.

During the spring 2011 semester, Student Senate, Staff Senate, and Civil Service Council all voted to approve the suggested resolution presented at that time to move toward a smoke-free campus. Faculty Senate did not vote on the resolution; as they felt that the Faculty Senate felt they needed to have more time due to quorum not present. This topic

was also presented to City Council to raise awareness of possible changes developing on campus.

#### **D. What are the suggested steps to be taken to make EIU tobacco-free?**

Two broad strategies to becoming a tobacco-free university exist. The first strategy is to make small, incremental steps (such as increasing smoking restriction, posting additional signage, implementation of fines for those who do not follow policies, and/or constructing covered shelters on campus for smokers). The second strategy is to make a single, broad policy that simply does not allow smoking or tobacco use on campus. We believe the second strategy to be the most effective and least costly alternative to promote the health of staff and students. The cost of policing smoking outside “designated areas”, as well as administrative costs of developing and implementing even modest changes in a policy can be circumvented by going tobacco-free in a single policy. Ty Patterson, the director of the National Center for Tobacco Policy recently stated that, because there is less resistance to the idea of going smoke free today (compared to 2003) most campuses today can effectively institute a policy in one year rather than three years.

If a tobacco-free campus were to be adopted, the coalition suggests four phases.

**Phase 1:** The tobacco coalition, along with other individuals from other campus groups and committees, develop recommendations for an implementation timeline, implementation process (including marketing, education, cessation, and monitoring/intervention).

**Phase 2:** A strong marketing and educational program informing current campus community, alums, potential students, and campus guests and visitors of the pending change. Additionally, tobacco cessation programs and services would be increased to meet the potential demand of tobacco users wanting to quit. Training of tobacco-free advocates who would monitor the policy and provide soft enforcement occurs.

**Phase 3:** Policy is implemented with a soft “nudge” enforcement approach utilizing tobacco-free advocates (students, staff, and faculty volunteers) who would be trained to monitor common areas, and when noticing a tobacco user, would politely approach that individual, inform them of campus policy and norms, and politely ask them to refrain from tobacco use.

**Phase 4:** Process and outcome evaluation of policy implementation and enforcement. Revisions to enforcement methods will be made if needed.

#### **E. What are the expected consequences of establishing a tobacco-free campus?**

**A marked reduction in smoking** among college students can be anticipated by becoming smoke-free. As an example, from Spring 2002 to Fall 2004, the number of male smokers at SIU-C decreased from 35% to 26% (a **26% decrease**), and females

decreased from 35% to 22.5% (a **37% decrease**). While the numbers of smokers would likely be less than those observed at SIU-C, we can expect a substantial decrease. According to national data, clearly the most effective method of reducing smoking in America in the past few decades has been simply to make it inconvenient for smokers to smoke.

At the University of Kentucky, a smoking ban resulted in an increase in enrollments in smoking cessation program by over 4-fold (from 33 to 146 individuals). EIU already has a cessation program in place. Tobacco cessations services and programs are regularly offered to the university campus through the Health Education Resource Center. The American Lung Association's Freedom From Smoking Program is scheduled as a group clinic, and is open to students, staff, and faculty. If a group clinic is not available, individual students may choose to participate in individual one-on-one cessations services. Brief assessment and screening of tobacco issues is conducted as part of student visits to the university student health service, and referral to cessation services through the Health Education Resource Center is made. Staff and faculty may also access tobacco cessations services off-campus, and may be reimbursed for these services, if the program is completed and meets health insurance program requirements. Furthermore, the State Quitline is heavily promoted through the Health Education Resource Center.

**A healthier and more attractive environment** will be another advantage. Currently, smoking butts are found throughout campus (many of these are collected during the "Butts Out Day" at EIU). The reduction of cigarette butts will make for a more attractive campus and serve as a recruiting tool as students visit our campus.

**A cost advantage.** The cost of maintaining the smoking areas and removal of cigarette butts from the campus would be expected to be eliminated.

**Support of EIU's "Green" branding.** With the EIU's recent developments in the area of renewable energy (the Renewable Energy Center, the Biodiesel Program, a proposed Minor in Sustainability, our award-winning recycling program), we propose going tobacco-free would strongly support our "Green" branding image

**Enhancement of recruitment efforts.** We believe that a tobacco-free policy will enhance recruitment efforts, as parents and students understand that the university discourages tobacco use.

**In conclusion,** we believe that the choice to become a truly tobacco-free campus will provide a healthier environment for both staff and students, make our campus more appealing, and help reduce the number of new smokers/tobacco users. This policy is anticipated to have little to no negative financial impact, and studies from other universities have shown that any resistance to the policy will be both mild and transient.

**F. Why has the coalition gone from advocating a "Smoke Free Campus" to a Tobacco-Free Campus?"**

Group members were moved by a CNN on-line article highlighting the growing number of campuses moving beyond smoke-free campuses to those becoming completely tobacco-free campuses. After discussion, group members agreed upon the following points: All forms of tobacco are harmful to the tobacco user. By focusing on only smoked tobacco, members of the coalition felt that an inequality issue existed in which smokers were being picked on. After discussion, members also did not want to inadvertently cause smokers to switch to smokeless tobacco. While many smokeless tobacco users are respectful, there is concern regarding the appearance of spittle on campus grounds, as well as potential health risks and concerns. Smokeless tobacco use is also growing among college populations.

## **References**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)

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Gilliland et al. Am. J. Epidemiology (2003) 157:861-869

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Gerson, M, Allard, J, and Gomberg, L (2004) Impact of Smoke-Free Residence Hall Policies: The Views of Administrators at Three State Universities  
[www2.edc.org/cchs/legacy/finalreport.doc](http://www2.edc.org/cchs/legacy/finalreport.doc)

## **Reliable Web sites on smoking and tobacco use**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)

American Cancer Society [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

Office of the Surgeon General [www.surgeongeneral.gov](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov)

American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation <http://www.no-smoke.org/>

[National Center for Tobacco Policy www.tobaccofreeNOW.org/](http://www.tobaccofreeNOW.org/)

American College Health Association [www.acha.org](http://www.acha.org)