Clean Air Working Group
Proposed Clean Air Strategy

GFC
February 22, 2021
Kevin Friese (DoS) and Andrew Leitch (IARM)
GFC Motion (March, 2018)

GFC asked university administration to:

develop a clean air strategy to minimize* student, staff, and faculty exposure to smoke from cigarettes, inhaled cannabis, vapes and hookah pipes.

* reduce (something, especially something unwanted or unpleasant) to the smallest possible** amount or degree.
** able to be done; within the power or capacity of someone or something
The working group began to meet February, 2019

Campus Saint Jean
Dean of Students
Enterprise Square
Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry
First Peoples’ House

Graduate Students’ Association
Non Academic Staff Association
PDF Association
Risk Management Services (including EHS)
School of Public Health

South Campus
Students’ Union
University Relations

- Aman Lit, Acting Manager Special Projects, Ancillary Services
- Andre Bourgeois, Vice-President Student Life, Students’ Union
- Andrew Leitch, Director, ERM Programs, Risk Management Services (Co-chair)
- Denis Fontaine, Assistant Dean Academic Administration, Campus Saint Jean
- Elizabeth Johannsen, President, Non-Academic Staff Association
- Fahed Elian, Vice-President Student Services, Graduate Students’ Association
- Greg Lembke, Associate Director/South Campus, Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport & Recreation
- Giles Rieger, Human Resource Services
- Jillian Hamilton, Issues and Strategic Communications Manager, Vice-President University Relations
- Kevin Friese, Assistant Dean, Health & Wellness, Office of the Dean of Students (Co-chair)
- Les Hagen, Adjunct Professor, School of Public Health
- Michael Sean McMurty, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry
- Michael Splinter, Assistant Dean Finance & Operations, Faculty of Extension
- Nadine Badry, Supervisor & NASA Representative, School of Business
- Patrick Patterson, Post-Doctoral Fellow, School of Public Health
- Randal Nickel, Executive Director Student Life, Augustana Campus
- Wendy Doughty, Assistant Dean of Students, Student Success
The university acknowledges that tobacco causes illness and death and that reducing its use serves the health interests of our community and beyond.

Members of our community should be protected from the nuisance and possible health effects associated with second-hand smoke and vapour.

Any effort to reduce smoking on campuses should take a harm reduction approach designed to reduce the negative consequences of smoking and vaping while maintaining an attitude of respect and non-judgement toward those who use tobacco and related products.

Any effort to reduce smoking on campuses should promote supports and services to help those who are trying to quit.

For the purposes of this strategy, vaping will be treated the same way as the associated substance when inhaled.
Working group activities

- Met 12 times
- Evaluated policies of peer institutions
- Surveyed peer institutions on lessons learned (through School of Public Health)
- Literature summary: enforcement of tobacco control policies (Patrick Patterson, Public Health)
- Surveyed our community
- One site visit (Western)
- Received legal opinion re: labour relations perspective on a smoking ban -- Office of General Counsel

- Presented to Students’ Council; met with NASA
- Updated GFC twice
- Updated PEC-O twice

Contained in the Executive Summary for this meeting
95 Canadian universities and colleges with completely smoke-free campuses, including four of our peers in the U15.
Survey was live first three weeks of February, 2020
Nine questions plus invitation to comment
Respondents by percentage and number per category (total 3,519)

- 1,620 undergraduate students
- 980 support staff
- 461 graduate students
- 153 faculty
- 119 APO
- 50 librarian
- 39 academic teaching staff
- 46 MAPS
- Other

Total respondents: 3,519
How frequently do you notice people smoking on campus?

- Never: 3%
- Seldom: 24%
- Sometimes: 41%
- Often: 32%
Which best describes your experience with second hand smoke and vapour on campus?

- It bothers me moderately: 32%
- It bothers me very much: 40%
- It doesn’t bother me at all: 28%
How often do you smoke or vape on campus? (total 382)

- Once or twice a week: 45.5%
- Once a day: 16.5%
- Twice a day: 11.5%
- Three or more times a day: 26.4%
Would you support a completely smoke-free and vape-free campus?
Faculty, graduate student, support staff, undergraduate, overall
Common themes in comments (% total, n=844)
Observations about the comments

Overall, comments show that a majority of survey respondents at the University of Alberta in all role categories do not smoke or vape on campus and many are concerned about possible health impacts and the inability of current policies prevent their exposure to smoke or vape against their will.

This analysis suggests that the University of Alberta community, as a whole, strongly favours some form of additional restrictions on smoking and vaping .... a policy to implement designated areas would likely attract widespread support, because of its greater apparent feasibility.

A policy to implement a campus-wide ban has support across role categories, although not held by a majority overall
How the working group landed on its recommendation

- Community concerns about second hand smoke and vape (40% “it bothers me very much”)
- Community strongly favours additional restrictions on smoking/vaping
- Best meets the requirement in the GFC motion (to minimize exposure to....)
- Aligns with *For the Public Good* health objective (*Objective 19*)
- Reasonable cost (though status quo would be least costly)
- Public health leadership
Why not designated areas?

- Research shows designated areas have more compliance issues
- Change management and cost
- Extreme difficulty identifying locations on our dense campuses (especially N Campus) away from non-users, safe, accessible all year, satisfy smokers and vapers
The working group recommends that the University of Alberta prohibit smoking and vaping of all products on all campuses effective September 1, 2021.