

The Senate Committee on Environment, Quality of Life, and Disability Issues

Progress Report to the Academic Senate on the Issue of Developing a Campus Smoking Policy

1. Overview

The issue of smoking on campus, as well as exposure of non-smokers to second-hand smoke, has elicited much animated discussion via the QCC Community Dialogue, as well as other email and interpersonal venues. What is apparent to this Committee is that, on a campus community of over 16,000 students, faculty, and administrative and support staff, there are many “stakeholders” – non-smokers and smokers alike – upon whom crafting a policy recommendation for consideration by the Academic Senate (and, ultimately, the Office of the President) would impact.

Having inherited the charge from the prior Committee – that of examining the issue of smoking on campus and responding with thoughtful and appropriate recommendations for consideration – the current membership of the Committee on Environment, Quality of Life, and Disabilities Issues has profited both from the groundwork previously laid, as well as the collaborative work of the current Committee members, director of the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, committee liaison to the Office of the President, and two representatives of the student body – all of whom, in recognition of the necessity for prioritization, have met bi-weekly in order to determine a course of action in a timely fashion on the matter.

The president has made it clear that he supports a thorough examination of the issue, as well as the provision of recommendations to the Academic Senate for consideration, but wishes to yield his prerogative for a summary executive order to allow for the College’s processes of governance to prevail.

2. Activities Conducted To Date

The Committee:

- Met three times: on 9/17/2009, 10/7/2009, and 10/21/2009;
- Reviewed the 2008-2009 Committee on Environment, Quality of Life, and Disabilities Issues’ Annual Report to the Senate;
- Reviewed the draft of Borough of Manhattan Community College’s and Kingsborough Community College’s “Smoking Policy”, as well as resultant achievements and/or problems;
- Reviewed CUNY Policy 4.6 on prohibition of smoking inside facilities owned, leased or operated by the University;
- Reviewed campus concerns/postings from QCC Community Dialogue emails;
- Reviewed documented concerns surrounding implementation of a smoking policy, i.e., extent of a policy (complete ban, partial restrictions, dedicated space), applicability of policy to faculty/staff/students/visitors, enforcement of policy/disciplinary actions, adjudication of disputes arising from policy, and practicality of establishing dedicated spaces;
- Reviewed Smoking Policy Planning Handbooks from (collaborative) AK, MO, KA, NC and CA community colleges;
- Reviewed published Abstract: Texas Public Health, 2005 Student Smoking Behaviors;
- Reviewed Northern Michigan University: 2008 Smoking Survey and Results;

- Reviewed Indiana University – Perdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) Campus Smoking Survey;
- Reviewed University of Minnesota Campus 2008 Smoking Survey and Results;
- Reviewed Rogue Community College: Smoking Survey and Results;
- Reviewed Newberry College’s Tobacco Prevention Policy/Guidebook, and Faculty, Staff and Student Pre- and Post-Survey Instruments; and
- Reviewed the American College Health Association’s October 2009 recommendations on policies addressing tobacco use at colleges and universities.

The discussions/deliberations at the 3 meetings of the Committee have focused on information garnered from all the above resources, as well as contributions from students and student government.

3. Projected Completion

The Committee feels it has not exhausted the evidentiary data it would like to gather and that it would therefore be imprudent to forward any policy recommendations for consideration to the Academic Senate in time for its November 2009 session.

Pending the completion of its study, the Committee does, however, feel that it can have potential policy recommendations concerning the issue of smoking on the QCC campus for review in time for the December 2009 session of the Academic Senate.

To complete its study, the Committee has decided to formulate its own Smoking Policy Survey, to be distributed via email/Tigermail to Students, Faculty, and Administrative and Support Staff, so that a more representative sample of opinion from across all constituencies can be taken, and the more than 16,000 “stakeholders” on campus can be given an equal opportunity to participate in, and a voice with which to “weigh in” on, the decision-making process as the Committee measures its potential policy recommendations.

The Smoking Policy Survey which the Committee will e-distribute will be:

- An instrument informed by research from comparable institutions;
- Validated by QCC resources for neutrality;
- User-friendly and brief;
- Constructed, in conjunction with QCC resources, so that anonymity is guaranteed; and
- Concluded and assessed with expediency in order to present potential policy recommendations to the Academic Senate in time for its December 2009 session.

Respectfully submitted,

The Senate Committee for Environment, Quality of Life, and Disability Issues

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