



University of Iowa News Release

Dec. 4, 2007

Mason to review campuswide smoking ban recommendation

After gathering input from the campus community and studying policies at other major research universities, the University of Iowa Smoking Policy Review Team has recommended that the entire UI campus go smoke-free by July 1, 2009. It has forwarded its report to President Sally Mason for review.

A copy of the recommendations is available in PDF form at <http://news-releases.uiowa.edu/2007/december/120407smoking-report.pdf>.

In November 2006, based on the recommendation of an ad hoc smoking review committee, Interim President Gary Fethke charged Susan Buckley, associate vice president for finance and operations and director of Human Resources; Susan Johnson, associate provost for faculty, and Joni Troester, director of UI Wellness, to coordinate the campus discussion of the recommendation for a full campus smoking ban. Fethke asked that they make recommendations to the president by the end of the fall 2007 semester.

The charge to the group was to recommend whether the campus should go entirely smoke free. If the answer was "yes," the panel was asked to recommend when the change should occur, what steps the campus should take to educate the campus about the policy, and what resources should be devoted to helping members of the campus community stop smoking.

Over the past year members of the committee held meetings with key stakeholders both within and outside the university; considered votes taken by the UI Student Government, Staff Council and Faculty Senate; conducted two open forums; and solicited feedback via a mass e-mail. It also studied research data and policies at other universities who are members of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation, a consortium of 12 research universities, including the 11 members of the Big Ten Conference and the University of Chicago.

Based on that information, the committee said it believes the UI should be smoke-free "to promote the health and well-being of students, employees, and other constituents."

"The review team has reached this conclusion based on the health risks of second-hand smoke in conjunction with the positive effect smoke-free environments have on the reduction of smoking by individuals, and the university's overall obligation of providing and modeling a healthy work and learning environment for our entire campus community," the panel said in its Dec. 3, 2007, report. "The university also has a legitimate interest in designing an environment that potentially increases productivity and reduces health care costs."

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, employees who smoke average \$1,429 per smoker per year in increased health care costs compared to nonsmoking employees, the UI panel found. It also cites studies that suggest smokers are absent from work, on average, up to an estimated 33 percent more than nonsmoking peers.

"The University of Iowa should adopt a comprehensive smoke-free policy which includes all property owned, operated, and leased from the university or property leased from a third party that is used by university students, staff or faculty," the committee concluded.

It recommends an effective date of July 1, 2009, for the entire campus, including Kinnick Stadium. It also recommends ending an exception that to date has allowed smoking for artistic performances, such as theater productions, where smoking was considered an integral part of the performance.

The committee said compliance with the smoking ban will be dependent on "persistent and consistent"

educational efforts directed toward students, staff, faculty and visitors, ranging from signage and forums to clear language in the UI Operational Manual.

It also calls for the campus to continue offering smoking cessation courses and resources, which it says will become even more sought out if the ban is implemented.

To address implementation more fully, the committee urged Mason to appoint a committee made up of representatives from Facilities Management, Human Resources, Student Health, Parking and Transportation, UI Hospitals and Clinics, University Relations and other units.

Mason will review the recommendations and consult with committee members and the UI's vice presidents before making a final decision on the smoking ban.

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