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## Campus Tobacco Survey Presentation

Raymona Lawrence

*Georgia Southern University*

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# Campus Tobacco Survey Presentation

Submitted by: Raymona Lawrence

4/2/2012

## **Discussion:**

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This presentation will be a review of the Tobacco Free Campus survey that was given to faculty, staff, and students in the Fall of 2011.

## **Rationale:**

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The Staff Council will be submitting the survey findings and recommendations for policy change to the President's Cabinet by the end of the semester. They are asking for resolutions from the Student Government Association and the Faculty Senate to include in this report.

## **Response:**

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4/10/2012: At its April 10 meeting, the Senate Executive Committee approved this request for inclusion on the agenda of the April meeting of the Faculty Senate. Moderator Krug has notified Ms. Jayne Perkins-Brown, Dr. Raymona Lawrence, and Ms. American Minc.

Minutes: 4/17/2012: A Request for Discussion of the Campus Tobacco Survey: the SEC, on behalf of Raymona Lawrence (COPH):

America Minc (CRI and Member of the Staff Council) noted that the last decade has seen a major initiative about moving to tobacco-free environments. One of the goals of the Staff Council is to provide recommendations for improving the quality of life for staff, faculty, and students. The committee met with Dr. Keel, who suggested that they see what the campus had to say. With the office of Strategic Research and Analysis, they designed a survey to assess opinions of the current tobacco policy and see if there was a possibility of having any kind of policy change. The survey was administered online in Fall 2011, with the report being provided to them in December. Tobacco is a public health risk. Custodians and grounds keepers are subjected to a health risk when cleaning up; access for people with disabilities is threatened; some faculty, staff, and

students do not have a choice of entrances and exits into buildings, and their respiratory systems are compromised when subjected to secondhand smoke. The committee hopes to prepare students for tobacco-free work environments, and to provide public health policy leadership. Also, the American College Health Association put out a position statement to show its support for Healthy People 2020 and Healthy Campus 2020 of the United States division of Health and Human Services. Their goals are by 2020 to reduce the portion of adults who smoke to below 12%, the number of college students who smoke to below 14% and who use smokeless tobacco to below 3%, and generally influence college students to remain or become tobacco-free.

The survey went out to 21,987 people; 36%, or 7,945, responded. The report shows the percent of faculty, staff, and students who responded, and also whether they were tobacco users or not. The largest group to respond was non-users at 78%. They also tried to gauge eight attitudes, among them

- Do people really believe that secondhand smoke is harmful.
- Do they believe that secondhand smoke or tobacco use in general increases health care premiums.
- Do they believe it harms the environment.

Some results:

- 62% responded strongly agree, or agree that secondhand tobacco goes against the rights of non-tobacco users.
- 62% responded strongly disagree or disagree that limiting tobacco use on campus goes against the rights of tobacco users.
- 72% of respondents strongly agree or agree that Georgia Southern has the right to limit tobacco use on campus.

The survey asked people to choose among three options: (1) zones or designated tobacco use areas; (2) a completely tobacco-free campus; or (3) maintain the current campus policy. The majority of tobacco users opted for no change in the current policy. Most non-tobacco users opted for designated areas or zones. Overall, 46% of respondents chose to go with designated areas or zones. There were also over 500 pages of verbatim responses, 3,650 comments, 46% of which came from students.

In 2009, there were 365 universities with tobacco-free policies. In 2012, it's gone up 339. Of our peer and aspirational institutions, one out of the ten is tobacco-free. Four out of our twelve aspirational universities are tobacco-free. What Minc was hoping to do was to discuss the interest in the Faculty Senate for writing a resolution to support any of the options for policy change, then move forward with a committee to assess current

practices, work with research into the National Center for Tobacco Policy, and make formal recommendations to the President for policy change.

Candy Schille (CLASS) asked if Minc was asking for a motion.

Moderator Krug noted this was a request for discussion only. She had told Ms. Minc that to have a vote on something there would have needed to be a request for a motion. Fred Mynard (COST) found it peculiar to have a survey on attitudes towards tobacco that is named "Tobacco-Free Campus Initiative"; it was like a political survey on attitudes toward President Obama titled the "Is President Obama the Most Terrible President in History?" survey. On the issue of tobacco litter, Minc had mentioned that cleaning crews may have a problem with that, but that GSU did not have such a litter issue, as far as he could see. He noted a colleague who visited Emory recently and mentioned that as a result of their new tobacco-free policy, the ashtrays have been removed, and the litter is much worse as a result. Re: promoting a healthy lifestyle, he did not think prohibition the best approach because the next initiative would have to be a burger-free campus if we're going to go with the issue of promoting wellness. Re: secondhand smoke, if you ask him if it can be harmful, of course he will answer yes, and this is the way the question was posed. If asked if secondhand smoke outside is harmful, this is a very different question, and he would clearly answer no. There are already tobacco-free zones, which are all the buildings, and tobacco-friendly zones, which is anywhere outside, so it seemed this is proposing a solution that doesn't have a problem. He noted for the record that he is not now, nor has he ever been, a smoker.

Mary Hazeldine (COBA) said zones do not work well. A lot of the smoke-free campuses started with zones, but smokers move away from zones and smoke wherever they want to. She also said COBA has cigarette butts all over the place.

Tina Belge (SGA) noted we have tobacco zones for students who want to smoke, but live in Residential Housing. She has seen students transfer schools because they can't deal with our campus not being tobacco-free, though that's a rare number. Also, people don't always follow rules even if you try to enforce them. She pointed out that SGA already voted for zones despite the costs and the zones' inefficiency because people move from smoking to non-smoking zones instantly, but SGA wanted to support the majority of students' wishes as found in the survey. But she also wanted to say that she took the survey; Minc's presentation said "Tobacco-Free" on the top, and that's an issue because the actual survey said "Tobacco Use," and she would have freaked out if she had seen "Tobacco-Free" on the survey when she took it. So far as she noticed, "Tobacco-Free" was not in any of screenshots throughout the actual survey. So the survey had a different title than the final report.

Jennie Dilworth (CHHS) asked what the difference is between the zones and the current policy. What was sent to the SEC re: the discussion request actually said “zones” and “current policy” were the same things.

Minc noted current policy just prohibits smoking indoors. A lot of people think there’s a 25 or a 50 foot rule, but there’s actually not, only a statement in the Statute about a reasonable distance, so zones would make a designated area, while current policy would be just not smoking indoors.

Candy Schille (CLASS) noted that she is in Newton, and pasted on her window is a sign which says no smoking within 25 feet, so she believed there might be some sort of zone thing going on already.

Minc said that’s not per the University Human Resources employee manual.

Marc Cyr (CLASS) said one of the problems with the validity of the survey was the point that was just raised, that there were three options offered: 1) limit tobacco use on campus and create tobacco-friendly zones; 2) create a tobacco-free campus; and 3), and this is the way it’s worded in the survey, maintain current campus tobacco policy, “See #1 above,” which seems to suggest that the two are pretty much the same. So the options are confused and confusing. Insofar as the issue of signage is concerned, when those signs were put up in Newton, he emailed Paul Michaud of Human Resources and pointed out that the signs – which are the signs still called for in the official signage manual (Cyr had checked two days prior to this meeting) -- did not reflect the actual tobacco policy on this campus, a policy he knew pretty well because he was on the committee that wrote it. Michaud phoned him back and laughingly said they were just getting ahead of the curve. That was close to two years ago. The sign has not been changed. Also, the Thursday prior to this senate meeting, the HR Manual said that campus employees are not allowed any tobacco use, not just smoking, on campus. Again, that is not University policy. People in the Staff Council and Human Resources have known for about two years that signage and policy statements do not match the actual policy of the University. Not only had he personally informed them of that, it also was in a letter that was published in the George-Anne, yet nothing has changed. He further opined that the survey was badly designed and therefore largely invalid. He thought there were questions of bad faith with how this issue is being approached.

Moderator Krug noted that the Senate Executive Committee discussed what Dilworth and Cyr had brought up about the confusion of options, and it seemed that people taking the survey might believe that “zones” and “current policy” were, if not identical, at least similar.

Minc pointed out that the actual survey listed the current campus policy, and in the options did not say “see item 1.” It said “maintain the current campus policy, see current

policy above.” She was not sure if the SEC was just looking at the report, and not also the copy of the survey provided.

Moderator Krug noted that Minc had referred, in her presentation, to the report, and that’s what Dilworth, Cyr, and she were referring to.

Minc asked Jayne Perkins Brown (Strategic Research and Analysis) to respond, and Brown clarified that page 10 of the handout was the survey report, while page 18 in the appendix shows the actual survey.

Minc then asked Chief Executive Human Resources Officer Paul Michaud to respond to Cyr’s comments re: signage and policy misstatements because she was not aware of that issue. Michaud said, “Our present tobacco policy states the following, ‘Smoking and the use of tobacco products (cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, etc) are prohibited in all Georgia Southern campus facilities and University vehicles including golf carts.’”

Cyr noted that University policy is only re: smoking. When it was originally written, the committee of which he was a member discussed smokeless tobacco issues and decided that, given that their recommendations were based on their research, secondhand smoke in buildings was the problem, but they couldn’t see a reasonable way in which smokeless tobacco made a secondhand health risk, so it was not included. Yet it is included in the official signage manual and in the April 12, 2012, item that Michaud had just read.

Sze-man Ngai (COST) strongly supported the tobacco-free campus initiative. He did not think our current campus policy protects non-smokers enough. The main problem he has is the entrance to the buildings. Last fall he visited a University in Asia, and their campus became smoke-free five years ago; he thinks we are behind.

John O’Malley (CEIT) also supported a no smoking policy on campus, also mainly because of the smoking gauntlet at building entrances. He further noted that it’s not unusual for students and faculty to walk around campus with cigarettes. Non-smokers shouldn’t have to deal with secondhand smoke.

Greg Brock (COBA) asked how zones would be enforced. Are the campus police going to fine people? There can’t be someone standing there all the time, so do zones have any meaning if aren’t enforced?

Minc said research shows that when you have a genuine respect for others complemented by respect for the environment, you don’t need a punitive approach, i.e. enforcement. They’re not suggesting a ticket system, but are looking at a marketing

campaign through our Wellness Program and other avenues. She couldn't give specifics because they don't know which way the University is going to go, but the general consensus of the committee is to not enforce a punitive system.

Rob Yarbrough (COST) said he was still confused on what the current policy is. He quoted the current policy from the survey and noted that what Paul Michaud had just read was quite different from that.

Lowell Mooney (COBA) noted that regardless of where we end up on the zones versus current policy, only 29% of the respondents want a tobacco-free campus, and should the will of 29% trump the will of 71%?

Attachment: [Tobacco Survey-Fall 2011-final](#)