

# Tobacco Free Initiative Portland Community College

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# Overview

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- PCC's journey to tobacco-free
- Challenges & lessons learned
- PCC Tobacco-Free Implementation



# **PCC's Smoking Regulations (prior to 2008)**

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- Smoking is permitted only in exterior, designated smoking areas.
- Smoking is not permitted closer than 20 feet from any door, window, ventilation vent or air condition unit.
- Smoking is not permitted in or by any well-traveled passage or pathway to a college facility that may cause non-smokers undue exposure to secondhand smoke.



## **Recommendations to ban smoking**

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- Prompted by complaints about second-hand smoke, litter.
- Two campus health and safety committees recommended banning smoking (2005)
- Referred by the Cabinet to the Educational Advisory Committee (EAC), Student Development Subcommittee (SDC)
- SDC Recommended prohibiting smoking or other tobacco usage on any PCC properties, beginning in Fall, 2006.



# March, 2006 - EAC referred issue to a Smoking Policy Task Force

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## Included:

- proponents and opponents
- balance between campuses
- balance between employee classifications
- student voice

## Charge:

- Review the current policy and determine if it can be enforced.
- Gather input from the entire college community.
- Hold campus forums (all campuses, all employee and student groups).
- Address the issue of enforcement, no matter what the policy.
- Provide a recommendation to the EAC regarding the issue.



# March, 2006 - Clark College banned smoking on campus and in parking lots

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Rebecca Wale from Clark College came to the April meeting of the Task Force

- provided a review of their four year process
- discussed the kinds of research, input, and/or policy considerations in designing a plan.

Rebecca's suggestions to the committee:

- Look at cost of shelters (e.g. 10 shelters would cost \$57,000).
- Document all sources when providing information.
- Use neutral communication with open dialogue
- Use the term "Tobacco-Free" vs. "Smoking Ban."
- Emphasize student access and health issues.



# Numerous Problems Documented on PCC Campuses

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- ❑ No maps or signs on campus designating smoking areas
- ❑ Inaccurate, misleading smoking signs on campus
- ❑ Ashtrays are placed close to buildings
- ❑ 20 foot signs are misplaced or missing
- ❑ No kiosks with smoking policy, flyers and pamphlets as the policy states
- ❑ No information about the Oregon Quit Line
- ❑ No enforcement



# Polling

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- ❑ Institutional Research Office spent six months designing and piloting a survey. It could be taken only once, online.
- ❑ A poll of 4025 PCC staff and students (April, 2007) showed a lack of agreement on what the policy should be.



# Some areas of agreement

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- 92% of staff and 89% of students feel that second hand smoke is a concern.
- 77% concerned about the effects of second-hand smoke they breathe at PCC.
- 36% of staff and 31% of students experience immediate health effects from second hand smoke they breathe at PCC.
- 58% of staff and 49% of students agree that reducing smoking areas is important to PCC's mission as a community college.



# **June, 2007 - Smoking Policy Task Force Recommended Tobacco-Free Environment.**

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## Recommendations:

- ❖ prohibit tobacco use, with a carefully planned education and implementation process;
- ❖ begin an educational phase related to tobacco use on campus that will inform the community, and allow for additional concerns and feedback to be expressed;
- ❖ support a campaign for smoking cessation and a re-evaluation of existing smoking areas.



# Debate

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- ❑ EAC publicized the report and recommendation.
- ❑ E-mails flooded the campus, pro and con.
- ❑ EAC held hearings, at which there was passionate testimony.
- ❑ EAC leaders and administrative liaisons understood that there was not a consensus, or majority.
- ❑ Task Force Recommendation was not adopted.



# EAC Recommendation to Cabinet

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- Adopt a strategy which would allow efficient enforcement of the current policy.
- Provide smoking cessation/education campaign.
- Discuss problems related to tobacco use at the individual campus level.



# Debate Continues. Support builds.

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- OHSU went tobacco-free in September, 2007.
- In December, 2007, PCC's Faculty Federation recommended:
  - restricting smoking to parking lots only, in order to move second-hand smoke away from the core areas of the campus.
  - modeling its enforcement policy on OHSU's, which focuses on asking people to cooperate with the policy, and offering them support if they want to quit.
- The District Student Council endorsed this proposal.
- Ty Patterson, Director of the Center of Excellence for Tobacco-Free Campus Policy (Ozarks Technical Community College) met with campus leaders.
- Coalition for a Tobacco-Free PCC was formed.
- Oregonian Editorial - Spring 2008



## District President Decision

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**March, 2008** - Campus presidents make recommendations. One campus recommends a tobacco-free college starting Fall Term, 2009.

**June, 2008** – PCC District President announces:  
“PCC will become tobacco-free at the beginning of Fall Term 2009.”

**March, 2009** - PCC Board adopts Tobacco Free Policy



## Fall, 2008 – First Steps

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- District Tobacco-Free Steering Committee established in September, 2008.
- Student-staff-community coalition formed
- Oregon Quit Line brochures, cards, and posters distributed.



**NEW PCC HEALTH INITIATIVE**

**Sept 2008: Smoking Permitted in  
Designated Areas ONLY**

**Sept 2009: All PCC Locations go  
TOBACCO FREE**



# Challenges

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- Getting buy-in on a major change
  - efforts to hold forums, visit Neighborhood Associations
  - hearings, email comments
- Reluctance of decision-makers to mandate (especially in academia)
- Fear of alienating students, co-workers, neighbors (visceral responses)
- Resistance to feeling “pressured”
- Surveys - help or hindrance?
- No staff member for health/wellness (no one’s job to lead the effort)
- Battle fatigue in advocates
  - hearing the same objections over and over again
  - objectors weren’t reading the studies or reports
  - over 10 years of complaints about smoking, but no resolution
  - 4 committees recommended tobacco-free college
  - referral back to the campus presidents after 2 years of debate



# What have we learned?

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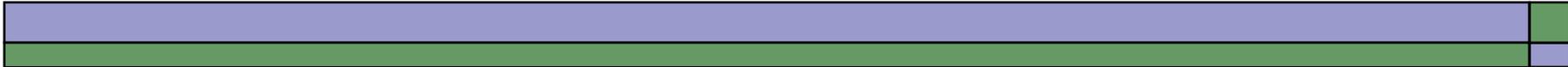
- It takes a concerted effort by a few dedicated, persistent leaders
- Trying for consensus prolongs the problem.
- Influencing the presidents is critical.
  - positions by Faculty Federation and District Student Council
  - input from influential people
  - news coverage, editorials
- A decision made at the top makes it easier to move forward.
- Help from external resource people and organizations has been valuable.
  - Clark College and OHSU
  - American Lung Association
  - Multnomah County Health Dept.
  - TPEP – Oregon Public Health Division



# Planning for T-F Campus

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- ❑ Hired coordinator to work with campus advisory groups, students/staff/faculty.
- ❑ Awareness campaign.
- ❑ Created new signs.
- ❑ Created compliance plan and rules.
- ❑ Identified training needs.
- ❑ Determining need for additional education/cessation initiatives.





# Website

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- <http://www.pcc.edu/about/policy/tobacco/>

## **A Healthier, Safer Place to Learn**

Portland Community College is proud to lead the way as the largest educational institution in Oregon to go tobacco free.

We are committed to a healthy, safe educational environment where students have every chance to succeed. Beginning on September 9, 2009, no tobacco products will be allowed on PCC premises.



# Contact

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