Tobacco-free Campus Survey Results

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Web survey conducted November 30 – December 11, 2015. Survey link was distributed to all students, faculty and staff at UW-EC. 50 paper surveys were also provided (by request) to Davies Marketplace employees who did not have a Blugold email address; 30 completed paper surveys were returned.

Respondent information:

2,960 total respondents  →  2,388—Students        570—Faculty/Staff

When asked “Do you think UW-Eau Claire should become a tobacco-free campus? This would mean that UWEC’s campus would be free of tobacco products including cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, and e-cigarettes.”
The following information was then provided in the survey:

“Some considerations:

- CVTC, UW-Stout, UW-River Falls, UW-Stevens Point, UW-Whitewater, and the University of Minnesota are tobacco-free institutions, in addition to over 1,100 other campuses nationwide.
- Tobacco-free campus policy has been shown to help students stay tobacco-free during college.
- A tobacco-free campus policy would create a healthier campus environment by reducing secondhand smoke exposure, particularly of benefit for students and employees with asthma, allergies, chronic bronchitis, and other health issues.
- 2% of UWEC students reported using cigarettes daily (according to our 2015 college health survey).
- 91% of UWEC students reported not smoking in the last 30 days (according to our 2015 college health survey).
- A tobacco-free campus policy has not been shown to affect enrollment negatively.

Some people are concerned that:

- Smoking off campus might increase if we went tobacco-free on campus.
- A tobacco-free campus policy would be difficult to enforce.
- Tobacco is a legal substance for people over the age of 18, so a tobacco-free campus policy would limit use of a legal substance.

After the above information, the question “Do you think UW-Eau Claire should become a tobacco-free campus?” was asked again.
When asked “How does second hand smoke affect you?”

It doesn’t affect me = 32%
It irritates my allergies, asthma, bronchitis, or other chronic health condition = 22%
I do not like the smell = 61%
Other = 9%

“Other” respondents were asked to explain. Answers included headaches, nausea, and other health concerns.

Respondents’ Reported Tobacco Use:

11% of respondents reported using cigarettes in the past 30 days.
14% of respondents reported using other tobacco products in the past 30 days.

Of student respondents, 4% reported using cigarettes daily.
On our National College Health Assessment results, 2% of students reported using cigarettes daily.

Of faculty/staff respondents, 9% reported using cigarettes daily.

Comments:

General comments included concerns about limiting freedoms, to concerns about health issues associated with second hand smoke.