

January 2021

From: Public Health, Nursing Faculty & Institute for Health Sciences

To: University Senate

RE: Commercial Tobacco-Free Campus Proposal

We write in support of the Physical Plant Planning Committee's (PPPC) plan for a commercial tobacco-free campus. As faculty who teach in Environmental Public Health, the recently established Public Health major, and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, we believe it is important for the university to create a campus environment that promotes public health. Smoking is "public health enemy number one." Eliminating smoking, vaping, and other uses associated with commercial tobacco products is an obvious and essential step.

The administration has implemented a variety of measures to protect the health of students, staff, and faculty during the current Covid-19 pandemic. We applaud these steps and believe that the proposed commercial tobacco-free policy also prioritizes the health of the campus community. In fact, approving this policy during the pandemic sends a strong signal that the administration's concern for campus health extends far beyond the current pandemic.

The three-step plan is a logical and well-reasoned approach to creating a tobacco-free campus. Although eliminating commercial tobacco use on campus is a long-overdue step, it is important to implement the plan in stages to ensure that is successful.

Finally, it is important to note that putting such a policy in place will demonstrate that the university has aligned its curriculum and its campus culture. With its vibrant array of health-related programs, Eau Claire is a leader in undergraduate health education. The campus environment should reflect this health orientation. Prohibiting commercial tobacco use on campus will further enhance the university's reputation as a campus that protects and values health.

We strongly support the PPPC's plan and urge you to support it.

Sincerely,

Public Health and Environmental Studies

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