

Rutgers University Senate
Student Affairs Committee
Response to Charge S-1305-2 on examining the
Rutgers Smoking Policy (60.1.1) and Smoke-Free Rutgers
April 2016

The Student Affairs Committee was issued the following charge by the Senate Executive Committee:

Charge S-1305-2-Smoke-Free Rutgers: Examine the desirability, feasibility, impact and means of evolving into a smoke-free Rutgers.

Background

The charge was first brought up in March 2013 to the Student Affairs Committee in order to address health concerns brought up by the students, staff, and faculty of each of the Rutgers Campuses. Although a smoking policy had been put into place years' prior, the effectiveness of the policy was put into question as students continued to face problems of second-hand smoke.

In response, the Student Affairs Committee had originally pursued a charge for a Smoke-Free Rutgers but was met with speculation that such policy would not be possible in New Jersey because of specific union laws that protect the employee's rights to smoke. The Students Affairs committee further researched the issue, and its finds and recommendations are contained in this report.

Summary of Investigation into the Rutgers Smoking Policy (60.1.1) and Smoke-Free Rutgers

On June 2015, concerns were brought up once more and the charge was to be reexamined for possible action. After further investigation, it was determined that union laws did not prevent universities from going smoke-free. According to the American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation's 2016 annual report of public universities, 10 other schools in New Jersey have smoke-free tobacco-free policies implemented. Research also found that 8 out of the 14 universities in the Big 10 league are smoke-free tobacco-free:

Illinois (Smoke-Free, Tobacco-Free)	Nebraska (None)
Indiana (Smoke-Free, Tobacco-Free)	Northwestern (Smoke-Free, Tobacco-Free)
Iowa (Smoke-Free, Tobacco-Free)	Ohio State (Smoke-Free, Tobacco-Free)
Maryland (Smoke Free)	Penn State (None)
Michigan (Smoke-Free, Tobacco-Free)	Purdue (Smoke-Free, Tobacco-Free)
Michigan State (Tobacco Free)	Rutgers (None)
Minnesota (Smoke Free)	Wisconsin (Smoke-Free, Tobacco-Free)

According to the Big 10 conference liaison, the Penn State University is currently taking action to convert to a smoke-free university.

In a survey conducted during the initial smoke-free charge March 2013, students have shown support towards a smoke-free Rutgers. Given the survey was taken several years ago, senators approached their governing bodies to resurvey the interest through student governing bodies. In November 2015, the Rutgers University Student Assembly passed a resolution in support of a Smoke-Free Rutgers initiative. In December 2015, the Newark Student Governing Association as well as the Nursing Student Senate also passed resolutions in support for a Smoke-Free Rutgers.

In examining the current state Rutgers Smoking Policy (60.1.1), the policy is remains ineffective. Smoking urns can found at the entrances of buildings at each campus which are clear violations of the university policy; this continues to be a problem for students trying to avoid second-hand smoke.

Given that there are not any outstanding laws or policies that prevent Rutgers University from joining 1475 other smoke-free tobacco-free universities throughout the nation, the Student Affairs Committee see that it is the best interest for the university to change its smoking policy to follow stricter guidelines. Taking this action during the Rutgers 250 strategic plan would not only allow for the university raise its standards of health for students but also to raise its standards as a newly inducted school of the Big 10. Additionally, encouraging the use of the already-present smoking cessation programs will facilitate the transition into a healthier, smoke-free Rutgers University.

Conclusions

- In accordance to the current Rutgers Smoking Policy, there should be immediate movement of the smoking urns away from the entrances of buildings at each of the campuses. Specifically, this includes the required 25-foot radius away from areas such as the entrances to class buildings, dorms, and libraries.
- Rutgers University should consider moving to a smoke-free policy to follow suite with the standards of the Big 10 as well as to help improve the overall health of it students.
- Students currently smoking should be directed to smoking cessation programs that are currently available on-campus. Additionally, the university should promote the uses of such programs.

Student Affairs Committee

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