

Smoking Ban on Campus Being Lightly Discussed

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At the first Student Government meeting on Wednesday, September 10th, the idea of a smoking ban on campus was introduced and a few student opinions were gathered. Joseph Cantwell first brought up a smoking ban because he had received an e-mail from Dr. Zimmerman about banning smoking on campus for health and hygiene reasons. Several campuses around the nation have considered (or even adopted) the idea of a smoke-free campus. Drake University, for example, has a smoke-free campus in accordance with the Iowa Smokefree Air Act.

It is recognized that the issue is very sensitive and needs to be handled with care. Student Government officials are currently working on putting together a survey to gather opinions and suggestions from students. Not only is a smoking ban being discussed but also other possible solutions, such as purchasing "butt-boxes" to be placed farther from the buildings or handing out tickets for smoking too close to buildings.

The reasons for the discussion are evident; often, when walking through the doors of any building on campus, the smell of stale smoke is potent. It is campus policy that all smoking be done at least 25 feet from doors and windows of our buildings, in fact, each student a contract stating that they would smoke that far away in their registration packet. However, many students smoke right next to entrance ways of our academic buildings.

Dr. Zimmerman has expressed his views that establishing a campus-wide smoking ban may help encourage students to stop smoking. Not only would it make our university healthier, but even more appealing. "After all, what is the advantage of having a smoke-infused LSSU?" Dr. Zimmerman asks.

However, many students feel that their rights and privileges are being taken away. As an 18-year old, it is your right to smoke. Many smokers feel that it is their decision to smoke and their not really harming anyone by doing so. The fact of the matter is, though, that second-hand smoke is dangerous and it imposes on all those around the smoker.

Many bans on smoking are now place as research that proves second-hand smoke to be so harmful comes out. Student Government is simply reviewing our current smoking bans on campus and seeing what changes (if any) are favored. All opinions are welcome and appreciated. If you have any questions, please stop by the Student Government Office in the basement of the Cisler Center.