

SENATE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL CONCERNS
MINUTES OF MEETING
December 3, 2012

[In these minutes: Approval of November minutes; Tobacco-free campus initiative discussion; AlcoholEdu overview and discussion.]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: David Golden (chair), John Broadhurst, Carol Foth, Matthew Fredericks, Madisen Johnson, Daniel Kelliher, Sandra Krebsbach, Carolyn Mayberry, Anthony Quill, Paul Ranelli, Tim Sheldon, Jennifer Snider, Catherine Solheim, Amelious Whyte

REGRETS: Peter Cao, Laura Duckett, David Fuhs, Stephen Gross, Maria Hanratty, Michael O'Day, Teresa Schicker

ABSENT: Lolita Davis Carter, Sarah Hamilton, Tanner Roberts

GUESTS: Ferdinand Schlapper, director and chief health officer, Boynton Health Service

WELCOME

Mr. Golden called the meeting to order and asked the members to introduce themselves. He made a motion to approve the November meeting minutes and the motion was approved.

TOBACCO-FREE CAMPUS INITIATIVE

Mr. Golden stated that the Tobacco-Free Resolution has been updated with new data and additions that were suggested by the committee. The following groups have shown support for the resolution:

- MSA supported the resolution 33 to 12
- GAPSA
- BAC recommended the campus be tobacco-free
- Public Health Student Senate

There is an opinion survey through OMS that is currently being completed by staff and faculty. The survey is sent via email, so the responders are self-selected. The responses are currently in favor of a tobacco-free campus, but all of the responses have not been gathered. There is also a question embedded in a Boynton Health Service survey that has produced similar results showing most responses in favor of a tobacco-free campus.

Mr. Schlapper has experience in implementing smoke-free campus policies as he worked for Boise State University, which was the first major, four-year public institution to announce they were going smoke-free. He has seen the advancement of the movement

across the country and noted that not one school has reversed the policy once it has been implemented.

Members asked the following questions and made comments regarding the resolution:

- What would change on campus specifically? Would there be designated smoking areas?

Mr. Golden responded that there would be no smoking on campus grounds. Currently, you can smoke anywhere outside of buildings, except within 25 feet of an entry to a building. This resolution is specifically for the Twin Cities campus. UMD and Crookston are both tobacco-free and Rochester is by default because of their location.

People can walk to property that is nearby and smoke. Implementation involves posting signs at campus entries and informing neighboring establishments of the policy.

- Will the cigarette receptacles be removed?

Mr. Schlapper explained that if you put receptacles around the perimeter of the tobacco-free area, you would encourage gathering in certain areas. Studies show that if a receptacle is six to eight feet away from where a person is smoking, they will throw it on the ground anyway. Other institutions have distributed portable ashtrays as a way to promote the policy, encourage compliance, and reduce littering.

- Item 13 of the resolution states: “Whereas smokers have lower grade point averages (GPA) than nonsmokers. The Harvard College Alcohol Study found that smokers are 27% less likely than nonsmokers to have an above B grade average (Rigotti, 2000). Daily smokers were found to have even lower GPA’s than high-risk drinkers.”

A member stated that this may be an ambiguous statement and does not directly state how academic success is impacted. Mr. Schlapper added that there is a relationship between smoking and depression. Studies have shown that smoking restricts blood flow to the brain, which can affect brain functionality and ultimately academic success and emotional health.

Another member commented that it might be a vindictive or mean spirited statement. People that are dealing with stress or attempting to break another addiction often resort to smoking.

- Members agreed that an item should be added regarding the age of smoking habit acquisition. Mr. Golden commented that the Surgeon General has recently used the fact that 99% of people begin smoking before the age of 26 to support tobacco-free campus initiatives around the country.

- Mr. Schlapper proposed that a menu of relevant facts be gathered and groups can choose those that are best suited to their audience. He continued by saying that surveys show that over half of the University community's smokers are trying to quit and have attempted to quit at least four times in the last year. This policy has proven to be effective in helping people to quit smoking. Price point and convenience are two major factors involved in quitting smoking successfully.
- Members suggested offering a list of employers that have smoke-free campuses to support that this resolution will help prepare students for the workplace. Mr. Whyte added that State law prohibits people from smoking inside, but if the company is downtown, people can smoke outside of the buildings. He noted that employers with a campus however, would be able to restrict smoking on their grounds such as Anderson Windows and Blue Cross and Blue Shield.
- Mr. Schlapper mentioned that there might be a list of employers that will not hire smokers because smoking has an impact on your health cost claims and productivity. Mr. Golden added that smokers are not a protected class. Second-hand smoke impacts those around you in contrast to other habits that also affect productivity. Under the Affordable Care Act, smokers are the one group that can be charged more for healthcare.
- Members discussed the importance of specifying that the data apply to the smoking of tobacco, not marijuana. It was also suggested that leaving it as a smoke free initiative will avoid further questioning in the event that marijuana usage is legalized.

Mr. Golden made a motion to delete item 13 and add data surrounding the age people begin smoking. The motion was seconded and passed. He will distribute the revised resolution via email at a later date.

ALCOHOLEDU OVERVIEW

Amelious Whyte, assistant dean of students, Office for Student Affairs, began by explaining that there is a desire to enhance the education for incoming freshman about alcohol use and other behavioral issues. The goal is to implement a program by fall 2013. Several factors have combined to make this issue a main focus including:

- A task force examining how the University supports fraternities and sororities. It was recommended that education regarding alcohol consumption would benefit those in the Greek system. From this task force, it was mentioned that all incoming freshman would benefit from an educational program.
- NCHIP's goal is to reduce high risk drinking and related consequences by 20% over a three-year period.
- Mr. Whyte is involved in the Parental Notification Policy and visits students that have been admitted to the hospital for drinking too much. In the 2011-2012 academic year, 39 students were admitted to the hospital for alcohol consumption.

This fall, there have been 44 students and the first semester is not over. Many of the students are freshman that have just begun drinking.

AlcoholEdu is one program that is being considered for alcohol education. It is an online program that provides information in several modules about the science of alcohol and the decision-making environment within a college setting. It can be completed in about three hours and there is follow-up information and a survey. It would cost the University approximately \$40,000; this fee is based on the size of the institution and additional modules will incur a fee.

An overview of the program was shown to members via the Internet and can be found at: everfi.com/alcoholedu-for-college. Some of the information contained in the video includes:

- There is evidence supporting that not only does AlcoholEdu increase knowledge about alcohol use, it decreases risky drinking behaviors and negative consequences associated with high-risk drinking.
- AlcoholEdu is designed to be distributed to an entire population of high-risk drinkers, moderate drinkers, and abstainers. This helps to create a shared experience that changes the campus drinking culture.
- The course includes multiple personalized pathways and individualized feedback based on prior drinking experience. The content is customizable to be relevant to every participant.
- Institutions can customize the course with their own logo, custom survey questions, and information for students about campus resources and student engagement opportunities.
- The program gathers comprehensive data on student's alcohol use and enables the University to develop an effective campus prevention program.
- Pre-and post course surveys capture hundreds of data points on each student.
- 86% of students that have taken the course reported being moderately to highly engaged and attentive.
- Over 500 institutions nationally use the program.

Mr. Whyte explained that the program will provide information about the students before they are even on campus. There is also reinforcement throughout the year in the form of follow up questions and surveys. An RFP process is being conducted to explore other alcohol education programs. Alcohol is currently the main focus but there are other issues of concern such as sexual assault and financial literacy. Everfi offers modules on these issues in addition to AlcoholEdu for an added cost.

There is currently an online course offered by the University titled "Alcohol and College Life" and is used by other institutions. The issue is that it is delivered over an entire semester and the need is for a course that can be completed before a student attends the University.

Members discussed the positive and negative aspects of implementing a required pre-matriculation course including:

- The data that will be gathered if the students are required to complete the course will be very valuable. Data gathered under circumstances when the responders are not self-selected affords unbiased results.
- Alcohol-related incidents occur at the start of the school year, so a pre-matriculation course could prevent some of these cases.
- Customize the pre and post surveys to include information about social interactions and organization affiliations.
- Studies have shown that 21 year-old males are most likely to engage in high-risk drinking.
- Members were concerned about the possibility of students' identities being connected with the responses. A member noted that students are often more compliant with paper surveys because they are hesitant to be connected with their responses in the future. Mr. Whyte assured members that the information would not be shared, and every effort would be made to ensure that the students could answer honestly without consequence.

Mr. Golden stated that the committee could craft a statement or resolution in support of the Office for Student Affairs implementing a pre-matriculation course. Members raised the following characteristics of a course they would support:

- Timely
- Implied requirement but not required if anonymity cannot be guaranteed
- Completion is anonymous

Hearing no further business, Mr. Golden adjourned the meeting.

Jeannine Rich
University Senate Office