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Tobacco-Free Georgia State University:  
A Case Study

By

J. Plemmons

B.S., Sociology  
North Georgia College and State University

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty  
Of Georgia State University in Partial Fulfillment  
Of the  
Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH

ATLANTA, GEORGIA  
30303

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Tobacco-Free Georgia State University:  
A Case Study

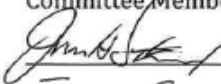
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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** According to the CDC (2008), tobacco-related deaths outnumber deaths from alcohol use, motor vehicle injuries, suicides, murders, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and illegal drug use. One out of every five deaths in the United States can be attributed to tobacco, culminating in a staggering 443,000 deaths in the US every year. Smoking is also the leading preventable cause of death in America (CDC, 2008).

In 2006, the Surgeon General's Report speaks to not only the detrimental effects of smoking, but also the harmful effects second hand smoke can have on an individual's health. Furthermore, the Centers for Disease Control's Office of Smoking and Health reported that 49,400 deaths every year in the US are the result of second hand smoke exposure, of which 46,000 will have died from heart disease attributable to second hand smoke in the environment in which they live, work, play, and learn (CDC, 2008).

While the negative health outcomes with tobacco use have inundated mainstream media and literature, tobacco use has another large and devastating effect on communities around the world. That effect is the result of Tobacco Product Litter (TPL). Beyond the unsightliness of TPL, several other unwanted complications to society result from the disregarded refuse, such as harm to the environment and damages incurred by other businesses not associated at all with tobacco products.

**Rationale for Intervention:** First and foremost the Tobacco-Free GSU Initiative was intended to promote the health of the Georgia State University community consisting of students, faculty, and staff. The American College Health Association (2009) recommends 100% tobacco-free campuses, indoors and outdoors.

Studies have shown that non-smokers and smokers attending college are in favor of campus policies that control the use of tobacco on campus (Rigotti, Regan, Moran, et al., 2003; Thompson B, Coronado GD, Chen L, et al., 2006). Sawdey et al. (2011) cites the need for the implementation of smoke-free policies by campuses in order to utilize the opportunity to create an atmosphere conducive to tobacco cessation. Considering that one third of young Americans attend a college or university (Rigotti et al., 2003), exposing one third of the youth population of the United States to a tobacco-free environment could potentially change the socially acceptable norms of using tobacco, whilst simultaneously creating an environment free of TPL.

**Intervention Strategy Analysis:** Tobacco-Free GSU utilized a methodology similar to the strategies Glassman, Reindel and Whewell outlined in their 2011 study *Strategies for Implementing a Tobacco-Free Campus*. The Glassman et al. (2011) strategy included: Creating a Committee, Utilizing a Student Debate, Publicity, Drafting of a Potential Policy, Targeting the College or University Board of Trustees, Addressing Barriers to Becoming Tobacco-Free, Student Involvement, Administrative and Staff Support, Resources, and Enforcement

**Conclusion:** In order to facilitate the best possible outcome, this author recommends those seeking to create a tobacco-free campus utilize the strategies outlined throughout this document, whilst creating strategies specific to their location, population, and situation.

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# **Tobacco-Free Georgia State University: A Case Study**

## **Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION**

According to the CDC (2008), tobacco-related deaths outnumber deaths from alcohol use, motor vehicle injuries, suicides, murders, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and illegal drug use. One out of every five deaths in the United States can be attributed to tobacco, culminating in a staggering 443,000 deaths in the US every year. Smoking is also the leading preventable cause of death in America (CDC, 2008).

In 2006, the Surgeon General's Report speaks to not only the detrimental effects of smoking, but also the harmful effects second hand smoke can have on an individual's health. Furthermore, the Centers for Disease Control's Office of Smoking and Health reported that 49,400 deaths every year in the US are the result of second hand smoke exposure, of which 46,000 will have died from heart disease attributable to second hand smoke in the environment in which they live, work, play, and learn (CDC, 2008).

While the negative health outcomes with tobacco use have inundated mainstream media and literature, tobacco use has another large and devastating effect on communities around the world. That effect is the result of Tobacco Product Litter (TPL). Beyond the unsightliness of TPL, several other unwanted complications to society result from the disregarded refuse, such as harm to the environment and damages incurred by other businesses not associated at all with tobacco products. These damages are referred to as *negative externalities*. Externality is the term used to describe the effects that the activities of one economic agent has on the activities of

another agent through avenues not accounted for by the general operation of the market. When these activities are harmful to an economic agent that is not compensated for the harm, the cause of the harm or its origin is referred to as a negative externality (Schneider, J et al., 2011).

In a study of 67 building entrances across 19 community colleges, researchers found that TPL was found at the same levels at colleges with proximity policies and those without; furthermore, they found that those colleges with 100% Tobacco Free campuses had significantly less TPL near the entrances (Lee, Leah & Adam, 2013).

San Diego State University Researchers (2011) conducted an assessment study in which 63 volunteers collected cigarette butts in 1-hour increments, covering all 300 acres of the campus with 6 gridded locations and collecting 23,885 butts. Seventeen high school students at the University of California San Diego performed an experiment similar to the San Diego State University study; in total they collected 6,525 butts (Sawdey, Lindsay, & Novotny, 2011).

## **Rationale for Intervention**

The Tobacco-Free GSU Initiative was intended to promote the health of the Georgia State University community consisting of students, faculty, and staff. The American College Health Association (2009) recommends 100% tobacco-free campuses, indoors and outdoors.

Studies have shown that non-smokers and smokers attending college are in favor of campus policies that control the use of tobacco on campus (Rigotti, Regan, Moran, et al., 2003; Thompson B, Coronado GD, Chen L, et al., 2006). Sawdey et al. (2011) cites the need for the implementation of smoke-free policies by campuses in order to utilize the opportunity to create an atmosphere conducive to tobacco cessation. Considering that one third of young Americans attend a college or university (Rigotti et al., 2003), exposing one third of the youth population of the United States to a tobacco-free environment could potentially change the socially acceptable norms of using tobacco, whilst simultaneously creating an environment free of TPL.

## **Intervention Strategy**

We know that tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of the death in the United States and we know that second hand smoke is harmful to student's health. We also know that TPL is not only unsightly and full of chemicals, but also costs a great deal to abate (CDC, 2008; Clean Virginia Waterways, 2012). All three of these issues are omnipresent throughout the GSU campus and community.

Literature in terms of best practices for implementing Tobacco-Free policies in urban and open campuses is lacking. Urban, sprawling, and open campuses pose complicated challenges to policy change and implementation, in that many individuals pass through the GSU campus that are not students and are not subject to enforcement mechanisms pertaining to only those within the GSU community. Furthermore urban campuses pose difficulties in terms of defining boundaries, when the campus is almost entirely comprised of large vertical buildings surrounded by sidewalks and street intersections with very little GSU property between buildings, anywhere on campus. Moreover GSU does not own the sidewalks, yet policy prohibits tobacco use on the sidewalks within twenty-five feet of a door. Additionally there are no well-defined boundaries of what is and is not GSU property, except for the GSU Library Courtyard and the GSU Unity Plaza.

When trying to assess strategies for policy change and new policy implementation, the literature for urban, open, and sprawling university implementation was lacking. Kreuter's (2005) espoused the Precede-Proceed Model to serve as a means to change behaviors, practices, and policies by focusing on variables throughout all levels of any given entity. Furthermore, this model asks demonstrative questions, such as: What is the problem? Who has it? And why? In order to facilitate change through any system, Kreuter (2005) suggests designing studies relative

to the answers of the aforementioned questions. These studies designed to facilitate answers to basic questions serve as a guide for interventions and behavior changes.

Glassman, Reindel and Whewell outlined in their 2011 study *Strategies for Implementing a Tobacco-Free Campus*. The strategies authored by Glassman et al. (2011) whilst not specifically geared toward urban, open, and sprawling campuses did however designed a strategy or framework with a large amount of adaptability to a wide array of settings.

The Glassman et al. (2011) strategy included:

- Creating a Committee
- Utilizing a Student Debate
- Publicity
- Drafting of a Potential Policy
- Targeting the College or University Board of Trustees

Addressing Barriers to Becoming Tobacco-Free

- Student Involvement
- Administrative and Staff Support
- Resources
- Enforcement

## **Literature Review of Strategy**

### Creating a Committee

Tobacco Free Oregon (2010) suggests creating a special task force utilizing someone on the executive council and/or an individual involved in the renewing policies currently.

Garnering support through the Student Government Association can give a movement the backing of the student population, and is an excellent opportunity to create committees that are members of a litany of student groups and organizations, ever solidifying the movement as diverse and cooperative. Having a wide and varied network built by several small committees is valuable in assessing the policy's impact on the community (Glassman et al., 2011).

### Utilizing a Student Debate

Changing policy takes time and this interim is an excellent opportunity for student involvement through a multitude of debate formats, be they social media or actual live debates. This process allows concerns and questions to be in the forefront, allowing all parties to become involved in the processes (Tobacco Free Oregon, 2010). Snider (2002) found that students become more actively engaged in debates, which increased their self-efficacy.

Debates have been shown to be considerably effective at hosting large format grouped discussions, which can lead to increased understanding of any given issue (Moon, 2005; Kennedy, 2007). Doody and Condon (2012) credit debates as an opportunity for exposure to ideas and viewpoints students otherwise would not have considered. Moreover, this critical thinking about new concepts empowers students by informing their position or standpoint whilst increasing the likelihood of garnering support via students actively participating in the discussion.

## Publicity

Glassman et al. (2011) outline the benefits of using a variety of media to gain publicity for the intervention. Tobacco-Free Oregon (2010) suggests when publishing to stay on message throughout the project and that the driving force behind the policy change is to increase access whilst preventing environmental exposures to known carcinogens, which is of the utmost importance to vulnerable populations such as asthmatics. Additionally, publicity can be the means by which strategic advantages are used to create, promote, and facilitate beneficial social balance for the interests of constituents affected by policy changes (Mtima, 2011). Cartwright (2012) concluded that adverse publicity could be used as an information tool and to strengthen the support of the movement.

## Drafting of a Potential Policy

Having something tangible that can be viewed when the opportunity arises can be beneficial to the effort. Having a policy prepared gives the endeavor clout and gives the outsider the perception of progression toward implementation. Glassman et al. (2011) points to the benefits of having a potential policy prepared in order to allow additional stakeholders and supporters to critique and expound upon the policy; in addition, the researchers suggest that this gives the opportunity for individuals in the university to take ownership of the proposal which empowering the proposal with the best opportunity for support throughout the university.

### Targeting the College or University Board of Trustees,

Of the many reasons sighted by Glassman et al. (2011) for swaying the opinions of trustees, the most significant was to make an argument framed around lowering costs. For instance, having fewer smokers in the workforce could improve productivity and decrease costs. Researchers at the CDC (2002) found that when compared to non-smokers, smokers had diminished productivity losses equal to \$1,760 with an additional \$1,623 in medical expenses. Another approach is to illustrate the cleaning costs associated with tobacco use, considering Tobacco Product Litter could easily cost a university \$30,000 a year (Clean Virginia Waterways, 2013).

### **Addressing Barriers to Becoming Tobacco-Free**

Harbison and Whitman (2008) conducted a study using focus groups at the Colleges Against Cancer National Leadership Summit in 2006 to evaluate what these school leaders perceived as barriers to the implementation and adoption of smoke-free policies at universities across the United States. The study found that administrative staff support, student involvement, and resources were the common themes identified throughout the focus groups (Harbison et al., 2008).

### Student Involvement

Harbison et al. (2008) found that the most widely held sentiment among students in regards to smoke-free policies was apathy, and stated that students were too busy or had their priorities geared toward specific student groups with their own projects which superseded new endeavors such as the promotion of smoke-free policies.



Tobacco-Free Oregon (2010) encourages those that wish to change tobacco policies in the university setting to try and keep faculty, staff, and students involved throughout the process of planning and implementation. The use of surveys can be helpful when looking to increase student involvement.

### Administrative and Staff Support

Harbison et al. (2008) reported many respondents, having experienced little to no support from administration, had very low success rates compared to those that did experience support from administration.

Fostering administrative support can be difficult and the use of demonstrative data could be the tipping point. If no data exists for the situation, Tobacco-Free Oregon (2010) suggests doing an observational study to assess harmful externalities such as second hand smoke in the campus community.

### Resources

As with most policy changes, resource identification, retention, and allocation can be instrumental to the success of smoke-free movements on campuses. Harbinson et al. (2008) echoes this in their findings citing that nearly every participant in the study experienced a lack of tools and guides to start, promote, manage, and implement a smoke-free policy on their respective campuses.

Glassman et al (2011) concluded that resources had a profound affect on the likelihood of successful policy changes and resources should be part of a needs assessment when designing a campaign seeking policy changes.

Resources can come in many forms: volunteers, funding, collaborations, partnerships, social capital, skilled or knowledgeable individuals, and organizational support. Tobacco Free Oregon (2010) encourages those seeking resources to contact local health departments and/or local chapters of health promoting organizations, such as the American Lung Association.

### Enforcement

Proper signage is essential for the enforcement of the policy, as without it individuals that are genuinely unaware of the policy may not comply. As Glassman et al. (2008) state, educating individuals when policy changes are made is a fundamental step in maintaining and creating a tobacco-free environment.

Tobacco Free Oregon created a guide entitled *Making Your College Campus Tobacco-Free*, in which the authors surmise that the methodology for the promotion and enforcement of promotion should be framed as the responsibility of everyone in the community, smokers and non-smokers alike, and that the goal of the policy is to support and promote a safe and accessible atmosphere for everyone in the community. The guide also has ten recommendations for the enforcement of a Tobacco-Free Policy. Also, a well-defined and structured enforcement plan should be established in the planning phase of a tobacco-free campaign (Glassman et al. 2008).

Tobacco Free Oregon's *Making Your College Campus Tobacco-Free* recommendations

1. Focus on positive intervention and peer enforcement, developing protocols for campus community members to respectfully ask others to comply and/or report noncompliance.
2. Consider authorizing public safety officers to give out citations for violations. While this may be a helpful deterrent, colleges without safety officers have succeeded with a focus on education and peer enforcement.
3. Form an implementation team to develop a communication plan; include key administrators, faculty, staff, student leaders and community health organizations.

4. Communicate the new policy through channels such as e-mails, media releases or college newsletters.
5. Include the policy in student and staff handbooks, in vendor contracts, and on the college website.
6. Post tobacco-free campus signs and decals.
7. Remove all ashtrays and butt receptacles from campus.
8. Create policy reminder cards that include the rationale for the policy and a number to call with questions or for more information.
9. Promote the campus as tobacco-free in college marketing materials.
10. Include in your communications and on policy reminder cards smoking cessation resources such as the Tobacco Quit Line, 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

## The GSU Experience

January 2011- I started my MPH studies at Georgia State University (GSU) and one of my first assignments, from Dr. Bruce Perry was to prepare a 3-minute speech. The idea behind this type of speech being that an opportunity to have your proposal heard may happen spontaneously or serendipitously leaving one with only a few minutes to get their point across in a persuasive and provocative manner.

Sitting in the GSU Courtyard before class one day someone flicked their still smoking cigarette butt on the ground directly in front of me. I was stunned. After noticing a GSU Police officer standing on the other side of the courtyard I approached and asked him what the GSU smoking policy was. He informed me that GSU did not have a smoking policy. I was perplexed, as I had seen small rectangular sticker on door and entryways that said *No Smoking within 25 feet of entrance*. He then told me that that was a state of Georgia law and that it was just state policy overlap of some kind and that he didn't know of anyone that had written a citation for the offense.

Walking away from my first exchange with the GSU officer I was perturbed, inspired, and in possession of my 3-minute speech concept. Smoke-free GSU for me began that moment. In preparation of the 3-minute speech assignment, I looked into GSU policies, spoke with GSU Ground keepers and the GSU Police again. I counted all the littered cigarette butts that were on the ground in front of the exterior door around Sparks Hall.

There were 166 cigarette butts around Sparks Hall the day I was scheduled to present my 3-minute speech, which was startling, considering I was not counting butts that were in the garden planter boxes or on the street, really just a 6 or so feet circumference from the doors. I was even more inspired after I counted those littered cigarette butts.

Most people have heard in one way or another that smoking cigarettes is bad for one's health and many individuals know that second hand smoke is also not something they want to ingest, but I wondered if people knew about all the negative externalities associated with Tobacco Product Litter (TPL). Those cigarette butts that we have all become accustomed to seeing nearly everywhere we go, as this TPL scourge has become endemic to many parts of the United States of America. So much in fact that it is the most commonly littered item on the planet (Novotny, 2009).

At this point in my life I had seen cigarette butts all over the world from France to Hawaii and everywhere in between. I knew that I could get GSU smoke-free, and now I had my angle. Too many times people have suggested that GSU is an urban, open, and sprawling campus in downtown Atlanta, and that it would be far too difficult to pass, manage, and implement a smoking ban because of the large size and location of GSU's campus in downtown Atlanta, Georgia. I needed to change the way the argument was being made. If I went after people for smoking I was going to run into an infringement on their freedom's and right's as an American to do what they wished with their body, but if I framed the argument that TPL was a ubiquitous problem that affected far more than just the person littering their tobacco refuse, I might just have a chance.

Smoke-Free GSU as a project was officially underway for the rest of the GSU community when I gave my 3-minute speech that was geared towards the problem of TPL at GSU. During my feedback and critique session, Nurez Madhany, who was the President of the Public Health Student's Association (PHISA), as well as someone I had already gained a great deal of respect for in the GSU Institute of Public Health, told me he thought that I could make this change happen.

I started attending PHISA hosted events and when the time came I was nominated and won the position of Vice President of PHISA. I spent the next year meeting and conversing with as many members of the GSU community as possible. With the help of PHISA I was able to utilize a diverse and multidisciplinary panel of fellow MPH candidates to brainstorm ideas and to help in public health interventions I was planning.

My first initiative was to promote the actual policy GSU had on the proximity of smoking from GSU buildings. The GSU policy at the time (January 2011) stated that *No Smoking was allowed with 25ft of GSU doors*. With permission from GSU and the help of a few PHISA members, I placed red duct tape on the ground in front of every door leading to the GSU courtyard, two-pieces of tape wide and created the no-smoking zone that was intended to show the GSU community where the GSU policy allowed smoking and where it did not.

This approach to public health promotion was somewhat successful in that the tape informed the GSU community of the policy but it had no lasting effects. However, we did learn a great deal about the logistics of executing a public health promoting intervention. We also knew that the next time we would have to do even more.

Several months later we decided to do the same intervention again, but this time I was going to make a video of the process and get before and after interviews. With the help of PHISA members we recorded over 30 interviews and had an hour and a half of video. Which was used to create a 7-minute video. The intervention had similar results to the first experience, in that it had no lasting effect, once the tape was gone the smokers continued smoking in the areas that were within 25ft of a door. That Video Can be found at: <http://vimeo.com/37776096> entitled *Public Health in Action at Georgia State University*.

After these two interventions I realized I needed to think bigger, I needed to change the policy, or to get the policy GSU had implemented in 2003, enforced. So I ran and became the senator to the Student Government Association (SGA) from the Institute of Public Health, and I also filled a vacant seat in the GSU Faculty Senate as one of my duties for the SGA. My primary motive for joining the SGA was to get a Tobacco Ban on the Referendum to be voted on by the SGA representatives. The plan was to get the students' support behind the ban and then take the ratified student legislation to the Faculty Senate so that it may be voted on and implemented by the president of the university. So I began writing a motion to be voted on in the SGA to see if they would even consider approving SGA legislation banning tobacco use at GSU.

Unbeknownst to me, a second group was simultaneously working on a similar Tobacco Ban. This group was the university's Budget and Planning Committee, comprised of representation from a wide variety of stakeholders, from biologists to general administrative staff. I found out about the proposed tobacco ban two days before the Faculty Senate meeting. The first Faculty Senate meeting I attended the GSU Tobacco Ban was passed. As of Thursday, October 18, 2012 GSU is a Tobacco Free campus. After all of my efforts, the movement was taken out of my hands.

Just when I thought GSU was finally tobacco free, I read the policy only to find that it was but a few sentences long and had no enforcement aspect beyond the suggestion that staff, student, and faculty kindly and courteously remind individuals using tobacco that GSU was now a tobacco free campus. I knew that this lack of enforcement would lead to an ineffective policy and I jumped at the opportunity to get involved again.

I joined the GSU Budget and Planning Committee and began forming the GSU Tobacco Task Force. This Tobacco Task Force is comprised of GSU stakeholders and representation

from GSU Police, GSU student Government, GSU Facilities, GSU Athletics, GSU Student Health Promotion, GSU Health Clinic, GSU Student Housing, GSU Counseling Services, GSU School of Public Health, GSU Respiratory Therapy, GSU Department of Human Resources, GSU Employee Development and Wellness Services (EDWS). Beyond assisting with the GSU Tobacco Ban and providing insights into potential issues surrounding its implementation, the GSU Tobacco Task Force is currently seeking funding opportunities to bolster the mission of the task force.

Having been employed by GSU as a Graduate Research Assistant in EDWS this position has presented me with new challenges related to the GSU Tobacco Ban. Due to my time here, I now view the GSU Tobacco Ban from a faculty and staff administrative point of view. How does GSU implement the new policy on staff and faculty? How do we address employee deviations from policy? Do we have a legal basis for fining or issuing citations to student, faculty, and staff?

The GSU Faculty and Staff Handbook is currently under revision. The updated GSU Handbook will have new GSU Employee Policies. As part of my GRA duties I was asked to create a brief consisting of university employees policies in terms of noncompliance with institution policies. That brief was then handed up the chain of GSU Human Resources to inform decision makers of the policies instituted and implemented at what are known as peer and aspirational institutions. Peer and aspirational institutional are universities that have similar size, diversity, and enrollment as well as institutions that GSU aspires to parallel.



### *Next Steps*

- April 11, 2013 the GSU SGA passed resolution 12.5 asking Atlanta City Council to allow GSU policies to be enforced by law. The GSU Tobacco Task Force is relatively inactive and is currently waiting on the new GSU handbook to be released as well as seeking potential funding opportunities.
- GSU also needs to assess why other institutions within the University System of Georgia can give written citations for noncompliance and GSU can/is not.
- As of June 2013, the GSU Tobacco Ban is still not enforced. Be they GSU faculty, staff, or student individuals can still use tobacco products at GSU without concern for enforcement.

### **History of Tobacco Use at GSU**

The GSU University Senate has passed several resolutions in regards to tobacco use at GSU:

-May 19, 1988-

Signs will be placed in every building setting forth the fact that smoking is not allowed.

- February 1, 1990-

No-smoking clinics will be provided for members of faculty and staff through the Counseling Center or other campus agency, provided that funding can be obtained.

- March 24, 2003

No smoking allowed within a 25-foot radius of all University building entrances.

- October 18, 2012

Georgia State University (GSU) promotes a clean, healthy, productive and safe environment for all student, faculty, staff and visitors.

Smoking and tobacco use of any kind is prohibited on all GSU owned and/or leased locations/premises; all internal and external areas, parking garages, and parking lots; in all GSU owned and/or leased vehicles. Smoking is also prohibited within 25-feet of all GSU building entrances and exits. University Housing will designate limited exterior smoking/tobacco use areas within the grounds of residential facilities.

GSU Reserves the right to initiate disciplinary procedures against any individual found to be in continuous violation of this policy; however all faculty, staff, and students have a collective responsibility to promote the safety and health of the campus community and therefore share in the responsibility of enforcement. Individuals observed smoking/using

## **Analysis/Discussion of Strategy in relation to the GSU Experience**

Upon the outset of this intervention, we were not using any particular methodology or framework. PHISA did what they could when we could, with whoever was willing to help. As our knowledge base grew throughout our Master of Public Health studies, we continually adjusted, adapted, and implemented strategies learned throughout classes to facilitate the changes PHISA sought at GSU. We were unaware of any university policy change methodologies and/or tobacco-free implementation strategies upon the outset of the campaign to change the GSU environment, and after the GSU experience we began looking for a framework which could assess and contribute to the knowledge base. Moreover, the strategy used was found to be the best fit for the GSU experience. The following is an analysis/discussion of the utilization of the strategies above with a methodology specific to Georgia State University between January 2011 and July 2013.

### Creating a Committee

We find the use of committees to network and foster new partnerships was an incredibly effective policy change strategy tool. Student associations, such as the Public Health Students Association (PHISA) and the Student Government Association (SGA) can be very helpful and powerful in garnering support in the community. The utilization of PHISA made the formation of the first Tobacco Task Force much easier. The PHISA Tobacco Task Force brought together a diverse group and created fresh ideas for new approaches.

The second committee formed was during the endeavor utilized the SGA representative for the Institute of Public Health. This position gave the opportunity to meet with key leadership in the GSU community and the ability to form another tobacco task force. This time the task force was comprised mainly of undergraduates, one of whom was the current president of the

SGA, Marcus Kernizan. As Glassman et al. (2011) suggested the support of the SGA was an irreplaceable and invaluable resource for coalition forming. The committees were comprised of students that were in the SGA and were already active in the GSU community, which only further solidified the momentum and dissemination of the GSU Tobacco Ban implementation.

Many committees already exist in the university setting that deal with alcohol and other drug use on campus. At GSU, one committee geared toward improving the health of all faculty, staff, and students was the Healthy State Committee. When approached about their potential interest in forming a GSU Tobacco Task Force to help implement the recently imposed GSU Tobacco Ban, the leadership was happy to take on the initiative. This task force was comprised of GSU stakeholders and representation from GSU Police, GSU Student Government, GSU Facilities, GSU Athletics, GSU Student Health Promotion, GSU Health Clinic, GSU Student Housing, GSU Counseling Services, GSU School of Public Health, GSU Respiratory Therapy, GSU Department of Human Resources, GSU Employee Development and Wellness Services (EDWS). Beyond assisting with the GSU Tobacco Ban and providing insights into potential issues surrounding its implementation, the GSU Tobacco Task Force is currently seeking funding opportunities to bolster its mission.

Throughout the campaign the creation of committees and taskforces were of the utmost importance to successful policy implementation. In congruence with the literature reviewed, these committees become the backbone of the initiative. Task forces and committees also have the ability to recruit new and diverse partners that can become champions of your mission. Committee creation is also a multifaceted approach, in that this strategy utilizes several other Glassman et al. (2011) recommended strategies just to execute this first step. To form a powerful, effective, and diverse committee one must recruit students, faculty, and staff into the

group. Therefore, the processes of increasing *Student Involvement, Faculty and Staff Support,* and *Resources* have all begun from the inception of the committee formation.

### Utilizing a Student Debate

The involvement of students is important to the success of a smoke-free policy, in that this format allows for both sides of an issue to be heard. Fortunately for my efforts, GSU has a very active SGA and the student newspaper the *GSU Signal* has been very interested in the formulation, ratification, and implementation of the GSU Tobacco Ban. The *GSU Signal* requested many interviews from several SGA leaders, as well as GSU administration and staff. Many articles related to tobacco use at GSU were also published before and after the GSU Tobacco Ban.

In addition to the campus newspaper, the SGA hosted a town-hall style meeting of which the GSU Tobacco Ban was a main topic of discussion. GSU Police Leadership as well as Representatives from GSU Administration comprised the panel alongside the SGA executive board. Most students were concerned with a lack of enforcement, and the lack of a clear delineation of exactly what was in fact GSU property and where they could or could not use tobacco products.

The utilization of a student debate should not be overlooked when seeking to attain a Tobacco-Free policy, insomuch that the debate environment allows for all opinions and ideas to be expressed in the company of those that have the capabilities to make or facilitate changes. Snider (2002) seemed to be accurate with the assessment that students will be more active in the discussion. Students that spoke at the town hall were very concerned about the enforcement of the GSU Tobacco Ban, as several of them were asthmatics themselves, and concerned for other

vulnerable populations such as disabled individuals in wheel chairs that could not easily reroute their path to avoid second hand smoke.

Lastly, the debate format allowed the GSU administration and police that were in attendance to hear the plight of those most impacted by the lack of enforcement throughout the GSU community. Hopefully, some of those in attendance will continue to attend open forums for discussion and take a larger role in their own endeavors for policy changes.

### Publicity

Our efforts at creating a tobacco-free GSU utilized social media, word of mouth, the school newspaper, events, and GSU television in order to publicize the official GSU Tobacco Policy. In the beginning of this endeavor and more than a year before the actual GSU Tobacco Ban was passed and implemented, PHISA used an intervention to promote the current GSU Smoking Policy, which prohibited smoking within 25 feet of an entryway to any GSU owned or leased property. With permission from GSU and the help of a few public health students, PHISA placed red duct tape on the ground in front of every door leading to the GSU courtyard, two-pieces of tape wide and created the no-smoking zone that was intended to show the GSU community where the GSU policy allowed smoking and where it did not.

Several months later we decided to do the same intervention again, but this time I was going to make a video of the process and get before and after interviews. With the help of PHISA members we recorded over 30 interviews and had an hour and a half of video. The video footage was edited to create a 9-minute video, which can be found at:

<http://vimeo.com/37776096> entitled *Public Health in Action at Georgia State University*.

EDWS hosted and participated in two *Kick Butts Day* events – one in 2012 and the other in 2013 – the first of which culminated with speakers on the steps of the Georgia Capitol building. The second event entitled *Kick Butts Day 2013* was held in Unity Plaza at GSU, and was intended to promote the GSU Tobacco Ban that had been implemented. The promotion of the event worked well and we gave away over 400 shirts with *Georgia State University is Proud to be Tobacco-Free* printed on the front of the shirt. EDWS also entered anyone wearing the shirt on Wednesdays into a raffle to win one of four \$25 gift certificate. The idea was to promote the policy by providing an incentive for individuals to wear the T-shirts.

Publicity for the efforts to promote tobacco-free policy change and for the implementation of the GSU Tobacco Ban were similar to the strategies outlined by Glassman et al. (2011) and Cartwright (2012). Publicity was used not only to disseminate the new GSU Tobacco-Ban but also to serve as a means of initializing conversations with those not in compliance of the GSU policy.

The installment of new signage serves as an all-day every-day publicity approach, stating that GSU is a tobacco-free campus, and also served as an instrument to build support for the policy change and serve as an information source for those that are on campus and are not aware of the policy.

### Drafting of a Potential Policy

Having a working draft of the potential policy was instrumental to the original efforts to change GSU policy, as it gave the endeavor substance and the perception of progression. Not having the policy would have certainly been detrimental to efforts geared toward garnering support from the student body and the SGA in terms of committee forming. Individuals seemed to be more willing to partner and give their time to the movement when they perceived the

structure of the campaign was more than just rhetoric. Though the original draft of the policy did not in fact become the official GSU Tobacco Ban, the language is similar as is the motive for the change.

### ***Proposed GSU Tobacco Ban***

Georgia State University (GSU), in an effort to promote student, faculty, and staff health and wellbeing, has banned the use and sale of all tobacco products at GSU.

Smoking and tobacco use of any kind is prohibited on all Georgia State-owned or leased locations, indoors and outdoors, including parking decks and sporting events. Smoking and tobacco use within 25 feet of all Georgia State building entrances and exits is prohibited.

University Housing will have designated exterior smoking and tobacco use areas. Enforcement by the GSU Police will consist of warnings and a maximum \$50 fine, both of which can be appealed. Violations deemed outstanding shall result in a hold on student transcripts, grades, and class registration. Faculty and staff in noncompliance will be considered by GSU Human Resources as a willful deviation from GSU Policy and will be handled administratively.

(See section 3.1 for the GSU Tobacco Ban Policy)

### Targeting the College or University Board of Trustees,

We did not target the board of trustees at GSU, as the actual policy changes had to occur at the university level. GSU operates within the University System of Georgia, which would step in if GSU policies were not in compliance with the university system's policies.

### Addressing Barriers to Becoming Tobacco-Free

Throughout the GSU experience barriers changed and evolved continuously. Many of these barriers were alleviated the day the GSU Tobacco Ban was passed and implemented by the GSU University Senate. Moreover, the attempt to change policy and the implementation of the new policy experienced similar barriers, which were fundamentally the same in terms of the



strategies reviewed above. In that *Student Involvement, Administrative and Staff Support, Resources, and Enforcement* were intrinsic to success of the endeavor.

The GSU experiences were similar to those expressed in Harbison et al. (2008), in that student involvement, administrative and staff support, resources, and enforcement were my largest challenges. However, GSU did in fact convert to a Tobacco-Free campus, so the barriers identified were more accurately stated as barriers to implementation of the GSU Tobacco Ban.

### Student Involvement

Apathy was probably the most widely held sentiment experienced throughout the GSU community in regard to the implementation of the GSU Smoking Ban. Many students did not feel that the initiative was not worth the efforts put forth by the GSU Tobacco Task force, as so many students were not complying with the ban.

Many students came out to *Kick Butts Day* events and were eager to wear the T-shirts in order to do their part to share the message of a Tobacco-Free GSU. Student involvement in the SGA was outstanding, though outside of the SGA very little support was maintained for the GSU Tobacco Ban. The ban asked students to share responsibility in enforcing the new policy, which seldom happens, as most students do not want risk having a discussion that could escalate to an argument as the result of a defensive policy violator.

Students were more involved before the GSU Tobacco Ban became ratified, as those students engaged in the previous movement to create a tobacco-free campus felt as though they had little course of action to change or tweak the policy as a result of the University Senate creating the ban as opposed to a student driven campaign.

Though student involvement was not ubiquitous throughout the GSU community, it was however considerably high at the SGA town hall meeting and generally much higher amongst those in the SGA. Those that were already involved in an initiative were eager to discuss challenges and success, yet typically were not looking to take on additional workload beyond that of their current endeavors.

#### Administrative and Staff Support

Administrative and staff support is essential to successful implementation of the GSU Tobacco Ban. Administrative support became much easier upon the GSU Tobacco Ban implementation, in that several administrative members of the community joined the GSU Tobacco Task Force. Additionally, the GSU Staff supported the GSU Tobacco Ban as part of their daily and required duties. Albeit, the support from the GSU administration in this case came in the form of those that worked for facilities placing new signage and collecting TPL at the behest of their respective managers.

Administrative support in promotion of the policy was very weak, in that the policy passed in October 2012 and the new signage went up in late March 2013. No funds were made available for the implementation of the GSU Tobacco Ban. The GSU facilities staff did remove all of the ashtrays on GSU property. Unfortunately, without enforcement mechanisms the removal of the ashtrays caused a dramatic increase in the total volume of TPL present in the GSU community. As Students continued to smoke on campus with all of the ashtrays removed, and many voiced concerns of causing a fire if disposed of in a trash receptacle.

The Employee Development and Wellness Services (EDWS) unit, which is a division of the GSU Human Resources Department, took on the task of implementing the GSU Tobacco Ban, under the guidance of the director Cheryl Johnson-Ransaw. Fortunately, EDWS was tasked

to research peer and aspirational institutions for best practices relative to implementing the GSU Tobacco BAN for faculty and staff.

The following policies are from several of the peer and aspirational institutions:

#### University of Alabama

Health Sciences and University Recreation Buildings are Smoke-Free.

The Compliance process usually includes a verbal reminder, a written statement of expectations, and a behavior contract that identifies resources for cessation. Continued lack of compliance could result in termination of employment, student status or patient status.

#### University of Oregon

University of Oregon is Tobacco-Free.

An employee who chooses to smoke on campus during unpaid time is not subject to disciplinary action but may be sanctioned as a member of the public. Employees are held accountable under UO employment policies and collective bargaining agreements. Contractors, vendors, event attendees, those who rent or lease University property and other visitors to the UO will be subject to exclusion from campus or fined. Individuals who knowingly and repeatedly violate the policy will be referred to the applicable campus administrative unit for appropriate sanction. Lastly, employee's can smoke in their car, as it is personal property and smoking is allowed in their personal vehicle with the windows rolled up, but it is preferred that no one smokes anywhere on campus. Smoking is prohibited in any vehicle owned, rented or leased by the University. Human Resources staff members are available to help you handle situations where employees repeatedly violate the policy.

The GSU Employee Handbook is currently (July 5, 2013) being revised as a result of the implementation. These policies above have been relayed to the Human Resources Department at GSU.

Lastly, administrative and staff support could have benefited from having better internal communications between all entities of the GSU institution. It is possible that the endeavor could have been more successfully implemented if the committee that proposed the GSU Tobacco Ban was in regular contact with other organizations and committees focused on the

same task. Workloads could have been shared as well as concerns and downfalls of the potential policy, before it becomes actual policy.

### Resources

Throughout the GSU experience, resources have come in a variety of forms. The only resources directly allocated to the GSU Tobacco Ban that we are aware of is the signage on the doors, as facilities paid for and installed the new GSU is Tobacco-Free stickers on all the doors around the GSU campus.

The GSU Tobacco Task Force applied for a \$12,000 grant from Smoke-Free Fulton County, but after a great deal of hard work and shuttling paperwork back and fourth between the GSU Finance Department, the GSU Legal representatives, GSU EDWS, and Smoke-Free Fulton County, the grant was not obtained. The GSU Tobacco Task Force was set to receive the funds at the beginning of April 2013. Unfortunately, stipulations of the grant mandated that the funds had to be spent by the end of March 2013, thus it could not and did not happen.

The only financial resources available to the GSU Tobacco Ban implementation came from the office of GSU Student Health Promotion and EDWS' respective budgets. These funds went to the designing and purchasing of 500 GSU is Proud to be Tobacco-Free T-shirts, 1,000 stickers with the same slogan, and \$100 to be given away in the form of four \$25 Visa Gift Cards. Beyond the above, no other funds were obtained by the project.

The identification of resources was difficult throughout the endeavor. Resources such as financial support were almost completely lacking. Again, the only GSU funds appropriated for the GSU Tobacco Ban implementation was intended for the new signage on entryways. The funds for the T-shirts came from the budgets of departments that did not initially intend to

finance any initiatives toward the implementation of the GSU Tobacco Ban. Greater support from the GSU administration in terms of financial assistance could have made a considerable difference in the current compliance with the GSU Tobacco Ban.

### Enforcement

Enforcement of the GSU Tobacco Ban is deplorable. Students are not policing other students because they feel that it is the responsibility of the institution. At the same time, the institutional policy states that students, faculty, and staff shall share the responsibility of enforcement. Therefore, the university expects the GSU community to enforce the policy as written, and the GSU community expects the institution to enforce policies that it implements.

Enforcement was by far the largest downfall of the GSU Tobacco Ban. To date, not one warning or citation has been written as a result of non-compliance. Written warnings could go a long way at increasing compliance with the policy. These warnings would demonstrate to the GSU community that the GSU Tobacco Ban is a serious and enforced policy.

Unfortunately, the GSU Police cannot by law ticket someone for an offense that is not against the law, and the GSU Smoking Ban is not a law - it is a GSU Policy and therefore cannot be enforced by the GSU police. As of May 2013, the GSU SGA has asked the Atlanta City Council to create legislation allowing the GSU Police to enforce GSU policies.

### **Georgia State University, Student Government Association Resolution 12.5**

#### Smoking Ban Enforcement

Propose amendment since SGA cannot have a smoking ban because there is no City ordinance. Amendment to change language to "City ordinance allowing for the enforcement of smoking."

In regards to enforcement of the GSU Tobacco Ban, the problem is a cumulative effect of lack of institutional or administrative support pressing for enforcement, and without which there is no enforcement, which then leads to more apathy about the policy and the movement.

As mentioned above, not one warning or citation has been written for deviating from this policy. Moreover, the lack of GSU Police support in enforcement has taken away any power the GSU Tobacco Ban had. Students, faculty, and staff see no ramifications for non-compliance and therefore do not comply.

### **Limitations**

Whilst the literature base is growing larger, evidence based practices for the design, passing, and implementation of tobacco-bans in dense, urban, and open campuses is non-existent.

One difficult hindrance to uniform implementation at GSU is the location of the GSU campus in downtown Atlanta and the difficulties associated with defining what is and is not GSU property. As the sidewalks are not GSU property, but GSU policy prohibits tobacco use within 25 feet of an entryway, in many cases this 25ft proximity boundary is covering the sidewalk. This creates confusion and makes rigid boundaries hard to define.

The University Senate passing the GSU Tobacco Ban during a planned intervention expedited the process and changed the outcome without regards to our efforts. This did, however, allow the movement to work on implementation efforts for the GSU community.

## **Conclusion**

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of the death in the United States and second hand smoke is harmful to student's health. Moreover, TPL is not only unsightly and full of chemicals, but also costs a great deal to abate (CDC, 2008;Clean Virginia Waterways, 2012).

Tobacco-Free institutions can restrict the ability for individuals to use tobacco during the school day. Furthermore, tobacco-free campuses can lower student, faculty, and staff exposure to second hand smoke.

Lastly, tobacco-free schools have the ability to reduce TPL, which can in turn decrease the institutions bottom line, which can ultimately lead to a better university experience for the entire community. Lee et al. (2013) is insightful in their conclusion, that creating tobacco-free campuses during formative years can be a catalyst for changing social norms and behaviors in regards to tobacco use.

As stated above the endeavor to change and/or implement GSU policy had no particular framework from the beginning; however as the campaign progressed PHISA, GSU SGA, and the GSU Tobacco Task Force had experiences that could contribute to the literature base. This analysis of the Glassman et al. (2011) strategies as well as the anecdotal evidence presented and inserted into this framework serves as a contribution to the knowledge base for urban, open, and sprawling campuses.

In order to facilitate the best possible outcome, those seeking to create a tobacco-free campus should utilize the strategies outlined above, whilst creating strategies specific to their location, population, and situation.

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## Appendices

### Question and Answer

#### **Q: What was the intervention?**

A: The Tobacco-Free GSU Initiative was intended to promote the health of the Georgia State University community consisting of students, faculty, and staff. The American College Health Association (2009) recommends 100% tobacco-free campuses, indoors and outdoors.

#### **Q: Why was the intervention performed?**

A: In 2006, the Surgeon General's Report speaks to not only the detrimental effects of smoking, but also the harmful effects second hand smoke can have on an individual's health.

Furthermore, the Centers for Disease Control's Office of Smoking and Health reported that 49,400 deaths every year in the US are the result of second hand smoke exposure, of which 46,000 will have died from heart disease attributable to second hand smoke in the environment in which they live, work, play, and learn (CDC, 2008).

#### **Q: What strategy was utilized for the intervention?**

A: Glassman, Reindel and Whewell outlined in their 2011 study *Strategies for Implementing a Tobacco-Free Campus*. The strategies authored by Glassman et al. (2011) whilst not specifically geared toward urban, open, and sprawling campuses did however designed a strategy or framework with a large amount of adaptability to a wide array of settings.

The Glassman, Reindel and Whewell (2011) study *Strategies for Implementing a Tobacco-Free Campus*, the strategy included:

- Creating a Committee
- Utilizing a Student Debate
- Publicity
- Drafting of a Potential Policy
- Targeting the College or University Board of Trustees

Addressing Barriers to Becoming Tobacco-Free

- Student Involvement
- Administrative and Staff Support
- Resources
- Enforcement

**Q: What were the barriers to the interventions success?**

A: The GSU experiences were similar to those expressed in Harbison et al. (2008), in that student involvement, administrative and staff support, resources, and enforcement were my largest challenges. However, GSU did in fact convert to a Tobacco-Free campus, so the barriers identified were more accurately stated as barriers to implementation of the GSU Tobacco Ban.

**Q: What are the first steps one should take to change a university's tobacco Policy?**

A: Form a committee. Invite as many stakeholders as possible and incorporate as many disciplines as possible.

**Q: How does someone publicize a campaign to convert a university to a tobacco-free institution?**

A: Identify as many resources as possible. Try to use a diverse approach, meaning that one should utilize as many forms of marketing/publicity as they can.

**Q: Should you create a draft of the proposed policy?**

A: Having the proposal drafted will not only help in the forming of committees and publicity, it will also give the impression that the movement has progression, as well as clearly defined goals.

**Q: How does a committee address barriers to becoming tobacco-free?**

A: As in the case with Glassman et al. (2011) student involvement, administrative and staff support, resources, and enforcement are going to be the most problematic. Addressing these issues in the planning phase would be helpful to the long-term success of the endeavor.

**Q: What evidence supports the need for tobacco-free universities?**

A: Studies have shown that non-smokers and smokers attending college are in favor of campus policies that control the use of tobacco on campus (Rigotti, Regan, Moran, et al., 2003; Thompson B, Coronado GD, Chen L, et al., 2006). Sawdey et al. (2011) cites the need for the implementation of smoke-free policies by campuses in order to utilize the opportunity to create

an atmosphere conducive to tobacco cessation. Considering that one third of young Americans attend a college or university (Rigotti et al., 2003), exposing one third of the youth population of the United States to a tobacco-free environment could potentially change the socially acceptable norms of using tobacco, whilst simultaneously creating an environment free of Tobacco Product Litter.

**Q: What were the key findings?**

A: Tobacco-Free institutions can restrict the ability for individuals to use tobacco during the school day. Also, tobacco-free schools have the ability to reduce Tobacco Product Litter, which can in turn decrease the institutions bottom line, which can ultimately lead to a better university experience for the entire community.

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of the death in the United States and second hand smoke is harmful to student's health (CDC, 2008). Furthermore, tobacco-free campuses can lower student, faculty, and staff exposure to second hand smoke.

Tobacco Product Litter is not only unsightly and full of chemicals, but also costs a great deal to abate (Clean Virginia Waterways, 2012). Tobacco-free schools have the ability to reduce TPL, which can in turn decrease the institutions bottom line, which can ultimately lead to a better university experience for the entire community. Lee et al. (2013) is insightful in their conclusion, that creating tobacco-free campuses during formative years can be a catalyst for changing social norms and behaviors in regards to tobacco use.

In order to facilitate the best possible outcome, those seeking to create a tobacco-free campus should utilize the strategies presented in the Glassman, Reindel and Whewell (2011) study *Strategies for Implementing a Tobacco-Free Campus*, whilst creating strategies specific to their location, population, and situation.