

Smoking...from front page

"It remains to be seen how this policy will in fact be enforced as there are no clauses in this policy that explicitly state the punishment for smoking too close to a building."

But the topic of punishment has been close behind the potential new policy. How exactly will individuals who break any new restrictions be punished? There has been discussion of fines, but a measly \$10 fine is not necessarily going to deter anyone from seeking shade and warmth at the side of a building.

There have been many safety precautions discussed with any implementation

of new smoking by-laws. One problem discussed was where smokers would be expected to go.

If the campus were to go smoke-free, smokers may be obliged to go elsewhere close to campus, such as sidewalks. But this raises more questions.

Assuming students are forced to move close to streets, on weekends when Wave patrons go out for a cigarette they are in a hazardous situation, specifically because of cars on the frequently busy University Avenue, and the chance of sidewalks being slippery in the winter months.

"This was a point raised

by the SU last year when a smoke free campus initiative was being brought forward. The council felt that it would be much too dangerous, especially with a licensed establishment on campus, to have an entirely smoke free campus," Douglas noted.

Another scenario discussed was allowing smokers to move into parking lots, where smoking policies would be different from those on campus. It is a new concept, however, that has yet to be approved.

"The proposal that suggests smoking be allowed in designated areas such as parking lots has only recently been introduced to the Stu-

dent Council. That proposal would need to be approved by the Board of Governors in order for it to take effect."

Most recently, in another heated discussion, council has decided to pursue a referendum regarding the policy, to leave the decision pertaining to the campus to the individuals who frequent it, but this too raises questions.

"If a referendum by students were to be held on the issue this would not be binding to the University as a whole. It would permit the SU executive to approach the Board of Governors with either an overwhelming majority of students in favour, against or split on the issue. This would

give the SU leverage to lobby on behalf of students for a proposal that met the needs of the most students."

But what about the smokers themselves? At what point do the rules start to conflict with the smoker's right to smoke?

"It is a complicated issue," Douglas said. "As of this time, we are currently in the process of listening to proposals and concerns being brought forward to council. The decision of council on this issue, whether it be to put the question to referendum or not will be what I bring forward in my discussions with the Board of Governors."

OPINION

By Sebastian Baglole
Panther Post

Smoking kills...especially when you have to stand 30 feet away from any building to do it.

What's the point having the Butt Stops when you got to run to the middle of campus with plenty of breathing room, smoke for a few minutes, and then beat it back to the Butt Stop to drop off your butt before it cauterizes your fingertips?

Presumably, UPEI desires

to rip the joy out of smoking, taken by extremely small measures. We are still permitted to smoke on campus, small as we are. And yet the smoking policy which had been a required 15 feet away from any building, has now been extended to 30 feet.

And yet how can the officials enforce this? Who has the power? Maybe they think smokers can't run. We can run, don't let the cough fool you, we can run. I'm only an occasional smoker and I'm pretty sure I can still outrun someone if need be.

So then why, why? If you crack up a policy no one can moderate, one I hadn't heard of until recently and something I'll bet most students didn't know before they read this in the paper, then it seems pretty clearly a lame-legged and passive movement, which leads me to believe that it had only taken effect to shut someone up.

Take a look at a larger university, any larger university. You do get a larger campus, and yet anybody who wants to and has a cigarette can smoke, anywhere outside

they want. And yet with such a minor percentage of smokers here on campus, the slightest whiff can offend.

Obviously this is a two-sided issue, and I see that, don't get me wrong. I know as a non-smoker someone can take offense to the scent. It gets in your clothes, your fingers -- some tell me it rots out your eyes. Some universities across North America have strongly considered a campus-wide ban on smoking.

But here's the thing: you will hardly find a study which

proves that there is a possibility of inhaling second-hand smoke and ingesting nicotine if you're walking by. Only a smoke-heavy area with little ventilation can do that, and we already have a ban on smoking in bars.

So is it merely the appearance of a non-smoking university that we crave, and not for the simple logic of preventative health safety reasons?

Correction

The January issue of the Post incorrectly identifies Gavin Hall as Gawin.

We attempt to correct any errors made. If a correction is needed, please email the Panther Post at pantherpost@gmail.com

Smokers feel the burn

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