

**Governance Executive Summary**  
**Advice, Discussion, Information Item**

<b>Agenda Title</b>	<b>University of Alberta Clean Air Strategy</b>
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**Item**

Proposed by	Andrew Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations)
Presenter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Andrew Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations)</li> <li>• Andrew Leitch, Director, Internal Audit and Risk Management</li> <li>• Kevin Friese, Assistant Dean, Dean of Students</li> </ul>

**Details**

Office of Administrative Responsibility	Office of the Vice-President (Facilities and Operations)
The Purpose of the Proposal is (please be specific)	In response to GFC’s March 18, 2018 request for university administration to “develop a clean air strategy to minimize student, staff, and faculty exposure to smoke from cigarettes, inhaled cannabis, vapes, and hookah pipes”, three options are being presented to GFC to consider with the intention of returning to this committee in the fall of 2021 for a final vote.
Executive Summary (outline the specific item – and remember your audience)	<p><b>Update since February 22, 2021 GFC discussion</b></p> <p>In February, the Clean Air Working Group presented GFC with a test recommendation that the university adopt a policy that would prohibit smoking and vaping on university campuses and events (other than for ceremonial use). <a href="#">Link to presentation</a>.</p> <p>Although there was little time for discussion and despite the request emanating from GFC itself, several members spoke strongly against the recommendation and expressed a desire to include a discussion of options to a total prohibition. In response, the working group co-chairs called together an ad hoc group of representatives (including some members of the original working group and some additional representatives) to discuss approaches other than a total ban.</p> <p>Three options emerged: total prohibition (ban); smoking and vaping being permitted only in designated locations on each campus; and no change to the existing rules but increased efforts to better assure compliance.</p> <p>The attached document provides a summary of the arguments for and against each of these options including contextual information, and recommendations for mitigating risks associated with each.</p> <p>Because the Board of Governors has indicated it is prepared to adopt the path approved by GFC, during the summer and prior to GFC being asked to confirm its preferred approach, administration will further evaluate issues and risks and potential mitigation strategies.</p> <p><b>Background and history</b></p> <p>As presented in February, the recommendations have come from broad-based consultation with units and organizations across the university, including Dean of Students, Risk Management Services, University Relations, FoMD, GSA, SU, NASA, AASUA (elected not to</p>

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participate), PDF Association, CSJ, South Campus, Enterprise Square, First People’s House, and the School of Public Health.

Early in its deliberations the working group developed a number of principles to inform their recommendations:

- The university acknowledges that tobacco causes illness and death and that reducing its use serves the health interests of our community and beyond
- Members of our community should be protected from the nuisance and possible health effects associated with second hand smoke and vapour
- Any effort to reduce smoking on campuses should take a harm reduction approach designed to reduce the negative consequences of smoking and vaping while maintaining an attitude of respect and non-judgement toward those who use tobacco and related products
- Any effort to reduce smoking on campuses should promote supports and services to help those who are trying to quit
- For the purposes of this strategy, vaping will be treated the same way as the associated substance when inhaled (e.g. smoking cannabis = vaping cannabis).

During its engagement, the working group:

- Met 12 times
- Evaluated smoking and vaping policies of post-secondary institutions across Canada and the US
- Through the School of Public Health, conducted a telephone survey with several Canadian institutions that had introduced smoking and vaping bans
- Received a literature review of smoking enforcement challenges authored at by the committee member from the School of Public Health
- Conducted a survey, which was completed by 3,519 members of our community, including faculty, students and staff
- Updated GFC and the President’s Executive Committee
- Presented to and received feedback from Students’ Council
- Presented to and received feedback from the Non Academic Staff Association

**Highlights of findings**

- 11.2 percent of survey respondents indicate they smoke or vape on campus at least occasionally - with 54.5 percent of that number smoking or vaping once or more each day
- 40.2 percent of survey respondents indicate that second hand smoke or vapour bothers them “very much”
- The community, as a whole, strongly favours some form of additional efforts to minimize exposure to smoke and vapour -- with 41.2 percent favouring a total prohibition, 37.3 percent favouring permitting smoking and vaping in designated locations, and 16.2 percent favouring leaving the rules as they are

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The most common themes among comments on the survey concern the adequacy of the current policy, concerns over enforcement, health impacts, freedom of choice and consideration of those with mental health or addiction issues</li> <li>Although 95 Canadian universities and colleges are completely smoke free, only four of our peers in the U-15 are smoke free (Dalhousie, McMaster, Queen's, and Western)</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further evaluate ways in which the university would respond to potential problems with each option</li> <li>GFC members engage with their constituents over the summer with respect to the options under consideration.</li> <li>In the fall of 2021, this item will be brought forward for a vote.</li> </ul>
Supplementary Notes and context	<This section is for use by University Governance only to outline governance process.>

**Engagement and Routing** (Include proposed plan)

Consultation and Stakeholder Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean Air Working Group includes: Dean of Students, Risk Management Services (including EHS), Graduate Students' Association, Students' Union, PDF Association, Non Academic Staff Association, Campus Saint Jean, South Campus, Enterprise Square, University Relations, School of Public Health, First Peoples' House, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry</li> <li>Discussion at PEC-O</li> <li>Discussion at PEC-S</li> <li>Meeting with NASA Executive</li> <li>Presentation to Students' Council</li> <li>Discussion at Grad Students' Council</li> <li>Campus wide survey of all stakeholder groups</li> <li>January 11, 2021 discussion at GFC Exec</li> <li>February 22, 2021 discussion at GFC</li> <li>April 26, 2021 at Board Audit and Risk Committee</li> <li>June 7, 2021 discussion at GFC</li> <li>GFC vote in September or October 2021</li> </ul>
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**Strategic Alignment**

Alignment with <i>For the Public Good</i>	<p>19. OBJECTIVE</p> <p>Prioritize and sustain student, faculty, and staff health, wellness, and safety by delivering proactive, relevant, responsive, and accessible services and initiatives.</p> <p>i. Strategy: Develop an integrated, institution-wide health and wellness strategy, which increases the reach and effectiveness of existing health and wellness resources, programs, and services, and promotes resilience and work-life balance</p>									
Alignment with Core Risk Area	<p>Please note below the specific institutional risk(s) this proposal is addressing.</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="581 1858 1524 1984"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Enrolment Management</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relationship with Stakeholders</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faculty and Staff</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reputation</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Funding and Resource Management</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Research Enterprise</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> IT Services, Software and Hardware</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety</td> </tr> </table>		<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolment Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relationship with Stakeholders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faculty and Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reputation	<input type="checkbox"/> Funding and Resource Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Research Enterprise	<input type="checkbox"/> IT Services, Software and Hardware	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety
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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership and Change <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Success
Legislative Compliance and jurisdiction	• UAPPOL Space Management Policy	

Attachments:

1. University of Alberta Clean Air Strategy – Three Options (3 pages)

*Prepared by:* Andrew Leitch  
Director, ERM Programs  
andrew.leitch@ualberta.ca

Kevin Friese  
Assistant Dean, Health and Wellness  
friese@ualberta.ca

## **Clean Air Strategy - Three Options**

General Faculties Council

June 7, 2021

Options for a policy to minimize student, staff, and faculty exposure to smoke from cigarettes, inhaled cannabis, vapes, and hookah pipes.

### **Option 1 - Complete prohibition (ban)**

In this option, smoking and vaping of any product is not permitted anywhere on campus. Receptacles are located at strategic locations at the edges of campus, adjacent to public sidewalks (e.g. Saskatchewan Drive, 87 Avenue, Rue Marie-Anne Gaboury, 46 Avenue [Camrose] etc.), for smokers to deposit cigarettes.

#### Arguments in favour

- Responds most fully to GFC's 2018 request
- Greatest reduction in second-hand smoke/vapour
- Easy to communicate new rules
- Easy to identify and address rules violations
- Supports For the Public Good, healthy campus initiative, and the [Okanagan Charter](#)
- Allows the U of A to demonstrate a tangible commitment to the above

#### Arguments against

- Concerns that some students, faculty, and staff will feel further marginalized
- Long walks for users, especially from centre of campus
- Represents an obstacle for people with addiction or stress issues
- Significant communication and change management required

#### Issues and risks

- Only applies on campus – not always easy to tell when one is on- or off-campus
- Being more restrictive than the surrounding community suggests a need for stricter enforcement, which may have resourcing implications
- Safety concerns of students, especially marginalized and resident students, travelling to edge of campus or off campus
- There are concerns that marginalized students could be singled out by authorities (or “carded”) for not following the rules
- Is this an unwelcoming message to Indigenous students, who have a higher rate of smoking than non-Indigenous students?
- Will students or staff with mobility issues have difficulty getting to a location where they can smoke or vape?
- Challenges with communicating and enforcing exceptions, whether they are for ceremonial or health reasons
- Does the university have the capacity to enforce this policy to the degree needed to make it meaningful?
- Does it stigmatize users to require them to leave campus to smoke or vape?
- Will this create messy and smoked-filled smoke stations around the perimeter of campuses?
- Will smoke stations at the perimeter attract people looking for partially smoked cigarettes and damaging the receptacles?
- Will members of our community venture into adjacent neighbourhoods to smoke, upsetting residents?

#### Responding to issues and risks

- Administration, including UAPS and Dean of Students, work with student associations and groups to better understand and address safety concerns as well as those of marginalized students

- Work with Human Resource Services (HRS) and Dean of Students on issues related to mobility and getting to a smoking/vaping location
- Clarify, with HRS and Dean of Students, when it is appropriate to accommodate users, such as for medical use of cannabis or cases of severe addiction
- Develop a communications campaign that addresses the change and educates about community expectations
- Ensure there is significant advance notice prior to the change
- Promote supports and cessation programs for people who want to quit

## **Option 2 - Designated smoking areas**

In this option, smoking and vaping are permitted only in a limited number of specific, designated locations on campus, similar to the designated locations where smoking and vaping of cannabis is currently permitted.

### Arguments in favour

- Significant reduction in second hand smoke/vapour across most of each campus, although it will be more concentrated in a few areas
- A compromise that considers both users and non-users
- Adheres to a harm reduction framework that acknowledges where users are at right now and promotes incremental change

### Arguments against

- The communication and change management are as significant as for the complete ban but the benefits are fewer (i.e. there will still be significant smoke and vapour generated on campus)
- Research shows that both users and non-users may be inclined to strategically use ambiguities in the policy to rationalize noncompliance, making it challenging to enforce
- The university may want to ban smoking/vaping sometime in the future, making this change a costly interim effort (e.g. two-step transition)

### Issues and risks

- It is exceedingly difficult to identify locations that are convenient, safe and accessible in all seasons, that adhere to campus and community bylaws and are far enough away from non-users to not be a nuisance - some locations already identified for users of cannabis have drawn complaints from those who work or study nearby
- There may be a push to identify separate locations for users of cannabis, cigarettes and vaping devices exacerbating the above
- There are concerns that marginalized students would be singled out by authorities (or “carded”) for not following the rules
- Will students or staff with mobility issues have difficulty getting to a location where they can smoke or vape?
- Does the university have the capacity to enforce this policy to the degree needed to make it meaningful?
- Does it stigmatize users to require them to gather in specified locations to smoke or vape?

### Responding to issues and risks

- Work with HRS and Dean of Students on issues related to mobility and getting to a smoking/vaping location
- Clarify, with HRS and Dean of Students, when it is appropriate to accommodate users, such as for medical use of cannabis
- Develop communications that highlight community-based enforcement strategies
- Ensure there is significant advance notice prior to the change
- Promote supports and cessation programs for people who want to quit

### **Option 3 - Improved - *status quo***

In this option, the rules would not change. For the sake of simplicity, the university mostly mimics city bylaws, which require smokers and vapers to remain a minimum distance away from doorways, windows and air intakes (10 metres in Edmonton, 5 metres in Camrose) with designated locations where cannabis smoking and vaping is currently permitted. If additional enforcement is contemplated, the university would need to consider how additional resources could be identified.

#### Arguments in favour

- Easiest to minimize cost as no physical changes or new signage are required
- Minimum disruption and change management needed

#### Arguments against

- Does not appear to address the GFC motion or cut down on the overall amount of second-hand smoke or vape nor the likelihood non-users would come into contact with smoke from users

#### Issues and risks

- The university will have to figure out what communications and change efforts will help with getting improved compliance
- Does the university have the capacity to enforce this policy to the degree needed to make it meaningful?

#### Responding to issues and risks

- Develop communications that highlight community based enforcement strategies
- Consider whether there is an appetite for a campus vote on the issue