

To those involved with the tobacco policy revision:

I ask you all to please read the following letter *completely* and with careful consideration, as well as an open mind. First, I would like to blatantly state my concern about the fact that I pay to live on campus for the majority of the time I am in school. I noticed Section 2.1 of the policy refers to the exception of dwellings located on campus. However, the reviewed policy did not specify anything further than that particular statement. If such exceptions are not clarified, ignorant disobedience leading to unnecessary disciplinary action in the future is foreseen.

Secondly, the fact that secondhand smoke is hazardous to nonsmokers could be better addressed if further measures were taken by West Liberty University to make the campus more "smoker friendly." Smokers have nowhere to go in the event of inclement weather. I have previously suggested to President Capehart via email that some sort of shelter be provided for smokers to be away from the rest of West Liberty's students, faculty, and staff who may be bothered by it, which many of them actually are not, as I have personally asked several nonsmokers.

While smoking may be a hazardous habit, that does not change the fact that it remains legal and a freedom of choice. Many students on campus over-eat and face issues with Diabetes, obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, etc. Does that mean that West Liberty University will also strive to serve *healthy* meals in the cafeteria and corresponding meal locations to "provide a safe and healthful environment" in order to address all other health issues? Research also shows that greasy foods, such as the ones offered daily in the cafeteria, and over-eating constitute a significant health hazard. In order to be consistent, is targeting unhealthy students next on West Liberty's agenda, or is the focus solely on discriminating against smokers?

Also, research shows that tobacco-free campuses receive considerable tax breaks, and West Liberty University has recently incurred financial setbacks severe enough to mandate that campus clubs return a portion of money from what they were allotted this year. However, it is tremendously unjust to let that burden fall onto the smoker community's shoulders. Simply because many do not understand the concept of smoking and are trying to find quick solutions to unrelated issues is no reason to penalize those who unfortunately suffer from this habit. On the other hand, if the goal is to encourage students to stop smoking altogether, this is not the proper path to take. If it were as easy as being told we need to stop, none of us would still be smoking.

The proposed policy revision is extreme, unnecessary, and could lead to bigger problems than the one at hand. Imagine being told you could no longer do what you needed to do to relieve the stress of school work, social situations, and life in general? Everyone has their own way of dealing with stress, whether it be eating excessively and/or unhealthily, smoking, drinking, or otherwise. It is inevitable that a change like this will cause chaos and rebellion among smokers. Again, I would like to respectfully stress the fact that I pay to live here and truly feel it is my right to smoke within any designated areas, as I have done for the past three years.

Your time and consideration of this matter are greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,
Lyndsay Miller