

## **Lane Community College Tobacco-Free Survey Summary of Findings from a Survey Conducted Spring 2011**

### **Background information:**

Lane Community College became tobacco-free in the Fall, 2010 as a result of a three year, campus-wide inclusive process that involved students, faculty, staff and administrators. The goal of Lane's tobacco-free campus is to promote health and wellness and enhance the learning environment through cleaner air and cleaner grounds/facilities, thus providing a more welcoming and accessible environment for all. Lane's Facilities Management and Planning Department estimates nearly \$10,000 a year is being saved on maintenance, in addition to improving safety and increasing sustainable practices.

In the spring of 2008 the Smoke Task Force and ASLCC recommended a campus wide survey be conducted to gather input about a variety of smoking related issues. A "Secondhand Smoke" survey was developed, and distributed electronically to all contracted employees and to students enrolled in credit classes on main campus. A total of 5,219 surveys were completed -- 4,412 by students and 807 by employees. Those survey results showed a clear mandate to create a tobacco-free campus. Students and employees were supportive of a tobacco-free campus if quit services are available: 6 out of 10 students (63%) support a tobacco-free campus and over 65% of employees support a tobacco-free campus.

In June of 2009, Faculty Council recommended a tobacco-free campus policy which was adopted as "Smoking and other tobacco use is prohibited in all core areas of LCC campuses; smoking and tobacco use may be allowed in some designated peripheral areas." During the fall of 2009 the College Council assigned the Smoke Task Force with implementation of the policy and choosing four designated smoking areas outside the core of campus.

In Fall term, 2010, the policy went into effect: "smoking and other tobacco-use is prohibited in all core areas of LCC campuses"; tobacco use is allowed only on the main campus in designated areas in lots B, L, M and N.

**In Spring Term, 2011 a second tobacco use survey was emailed to 14,700 students and employees;** 1,347 students/employees submitted responses (total response rate = 9.2%). The goal of the survey was to evaluate the tobacco-free policy in its third term following implementation. The survey was conducted on behalf of the Lane Community College Tobacco-Free Implementation Team.

**34% of all survey respondents were current smokers,** 1% were smokeless tobacco users, 27% were former tobacco users and 37% had never used tobacco products. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, in Oregon, 16.3% of the adult population (aged 18+ years) are current cigarette smokers.

A summary of findings from the first seven questions are depicted by graphs.

Below is a summary of the concerns or suggestions submitted by respondents. 860 or 64% of the 1,347 respondents answered question #8 -- "Tell us any concerns about, or suggestions for the designated smoking area on the main campus, the tobacco-free policy and/or cessation resources."

**\*\* Please note that the numbers and percents below reflect the number of concerns or suggestions that were reported – not the number of respondents reporting a concern or suggestion. For example, one person might have expressed a concern about safety, suggested creating more shelters, and reported a concern that Building 10 was a problem area (e.g. smokers out of compliance). That respondent's concerns/suggestions resulted in three different findings reported below.**

Summary of question #8 comments and a few representative comments:

- **25% (N = 214) of question #8 respondents think the policy is working well**

“I’m really happy that the campus is now smoke free. I used to have to hold my breath every time I left building #19 to head over to the center building because of all of the smoking. I can’t stand smoke, and I have a really hard time breathing around it. Since the new policy, this problem has been reduced drastically--I can actually go where I need to go and breathe without any problem. The only time I’ve held my breath since is when I was forced to park near a smoking area, and as annoying as this is, I’m realistic to know that a lot of people are addicted to cigarettes and they need somewhere to smoke. I’m just glad that they can no longer smoke throughout campus, because I believe that my right to breathe far outweighs the right of the smoker. Smokers have lost a little convenience, while the rest of us have gained the right of breathing air that is free of nicotine and cancer causing chemicals.”

- **14% (N = 115) of question #8 respondents think the policy is not working well**

“I find that the placement of the smoking areas are dangerous and the area in front of the school is always filthy due to the higher volume of smokers in a confined space. And the area by building 16 is congested with smokers dodging traffic (some drivers speed through the area in excess of 15 mph). Even after I quit smoking, which I plan soon, these problems will exist. And to ban smoking from campus completely puts added stress on those who are unable or unwilling to kick the habit. College is hard enough for some of the folks and nicotine withdrawal while trying to focus on school work is not easy. Maybe adding a few areas could ease the congestion and keep everyone happy. Compromise is not a dirty word.”

- 16% (N = 134) of question #8 respondents pointed out specific areas of concern related to the designated smoking areas (traffic, safety, etc.) with Lot B and Lot L designated areas receiving the most comments.
- 12% (N = 101) of question #8 respondents mentioned exposure to smoke in parking lots/by cars.
- 11% (N = 93) of question #8 respondents mentioned traffic/safety concerns or issues related to the designated smoking areas.
- Following is a summary of comments related to increasing/decreasing smoking shelter size or number and placement of shelters:
  - Need bigger shelters/areas/cover – 86 of question #8 respondents = 10%
  - Increase number of areas/shelters – 71 of question #8 respondents = 8%
  - Move shelters/areas out further – 59 of question #8 respondents = 7%
  - Move shelter(s) closer in/back on campus – 48 of question #8 respondents = 6%.
- 8% (N = 68) of question #8 respondents said Lane needs to do something about cigarette butt litter.
- 6% (N = 57) of question #8 respondents said they encounter smoke in walkways.
- 3% (N = 25) of question #8 respondents want more emphasis on tobacco cessation/resources.