Written by Vanessa Nagel, Staff Writer
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Safety and wellness are two necessary elements in creating a favorable college campus. Illinois State University's Student Government Association (SGA) recently revised the smoking and tobacco use policy to fit these elements into the campus environment.

"Last year, the Student Government Association conducted a survey and the students overwhelmingly voted for a tobacco-free Quad," Ryan Trompeter, junior SGA student senator, said.

"By banning tobacco on the Quad, we are only doing what the majority of ISU students want," he added.

Trompeter said he has received positive feedback from students regarding the revisions.

However, as with every policy, there are individuals who disagree with the restrictions. Limiting tobacco use to low-traffic areas on campus may cause an inconvenience for students who smoke.

The policy prohibits smoking inside all buildings and facilities including stadiums, gymnasiums and pavilions; university vehicles; within a 15-foot distance from entrances, exits, windows that open and ventilation intakes on any campus building; the Quad, including all sidewalks, walkways and seating areas; the area between the State Farm Hall of Business and the South University Street parking Garage; Schroeder Plaza; the College Avenue pedestrian bridge; Milner plaza; the In Exchange sculpture garden and the walkways between that and the Quad.

The policy states that, "the dangers associated with smoking and smokeless tobacco, and with secondary smoke, are becoming increasingly evident."

While these dangers have been taken into serious consideration by SGA, the revised policy was constructed to protect the rights of users and non-users alike.

“Our main hope is to create a campus where people are both free to smoke and also free from smoke,” Ben Adams, junior SGA student senator, said. “Finally, because the policy relies on peer policing, we hope to foster an understanding and mutual respect between smokers and nonsmokers.”

Adams said most students are pleased to see that SGA hears and responds to their concerns.

Other policies on campus have raised a buzz amongst students as well. Dress attire policies at the Student Fitness Center frequently top the list of student criticisms.

The Student Fitness Center implements a proper attire policy in an effort to promote safety, reduce the spread of communicable diseases and prevent additional wear and tear on the equipment. The policy clarifies that students wearing inappropriate or offensive clothing will be asked to adjust to the policy or leave the facility.

Some students feel that the attire specifications seem to clash with the latest cutoff tank top trend. Others feel that the policy limits their freedom of expression.

SGA members assure students that the policy is meant to be beneficial — not restricting.

“The recreation center’s attire policy focuses on preserving decency and ensuring that all students and recreation center members can feel comfortable while exercising,” Adams said. “The rights of expression are certainly important, but so too is the university’s dedication to diversity and tolerance. Students should feel free to express and display their beliefs, so long as they do not offend others.”

The final campus policy that has students gossiping is the restriction on skateboards. The question stands as, “why is skateboarding a prohibited form of transportation and recreation, yet bicycling is acceptable?”

The policy extends the restriction on skateboards to all areas on campus instead of just high traffic areas. The skateboarding policy is equally as important as other legislations on campus, although it may seem more informal to students.

“The policies are designed to create a safe and stable environment for learning,” Adams said. “The university believes that skateboards threaten the safety of pedestrians and the skateboarders themselves. Additionally, they can damage university property.”

All campus policies are created with the safety and wellness of the ISU community in mind.