

Breathing easy on another Oregon campus

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Good for Mt. Hood Community College. The college district's board has agreed to prohibit tobacco use on all of the college's premises, effective next January.

In doing so, the school joins Portland Community College, Oregon Coast Community College and Clark College in a Northwest mini-movement that reflects a nationwide trend toward the smoke-free campus. It's a trend The Oregonian [has supported](#) a time or [two](#).

Here's a snippet of what we said editorially in April 2008:

Gone, thankfully, are the days when a popular, exquisitely cool University of Oregon professor was known for chain-smoking Gauloises throughout his lectures on Jean-Paul Sartre. Sartre, the professor was fond of pointing out, smoked the French-made Gauloises, too. Years later, of course, Sartre died of a lung tumor, people got smarter about the hazards of tobacco and professors and students are mercifully prohibited from lighting up in classrooms at most U.S. colleges. The smokers have been moved outdoors. At Portland Community College, Student Body President Victoria Galanopoulos wants to change that. She and a PCC task force, backed by the American Lung Association of Oregon, want to snuff smoking anywhere on the college's campuses, including the outdoor entryways where smokers now gather. PCC administrators should support steps that begin moving the college toward that worthy goal. Going tobacco-free may not make perfect sense on every college campus, but it appears to at PCC, where students emerging from its urban classrooms often have to run through a gauntlet of smokers.

Then, in a follow-up editorial last February, we called for a statewide campus ban:

Legislators, are you listening? If not, they should listen to nursing student Rebecca Geary, who attends Mt. Hood Community College and wishes it would follow PCC's lead.

"I have seldom walked through the parking lots, or from one class to the next," she says, "without having to walk through at least one cloud of smoke."

Geary, a mother, grandmother and cancer survivor, is right. Her concern for her health should trump her fellow students' compulsion to light up on campus.

At the Mt. Hood Community College board meeting in March, Geary described her struggle with lung cancer and her sensitivity to the secondhand smoke she encounters while walking across campus. It was powerful testimony, and board members are to be commended for moving swiftly to adopt the sensible new campus tobacco policy.

The American Lung Association promptly and properly congratulated the board. Read about the organization's tobacco-free campus program [here](#).

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