

June 12, 2009

To: Board of Education, Southwestern Oregon Community College

The SOCC nursing faculty support all efforts by the college to create a smoke-free campus. As nursing faculty, we are committed to wellness and health measures that prevent illness. Smoking is linked to many chronic diseases. Many patients seek health care for illnesses related to their smoking history:

“Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body; causing many diseases and reducing the health of smokers in general. The adverse health effects from cigarette smoking account for an estimated 438,000 deaths, or nearly 1 of every 5 deaths, each year in the United States. More deaths are caused each year by tobacco use than by all deaths from human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), illegal drug use, alcohol use, motor vehicle injuries, suicides, and murders combined.”

CDC website, 6/12/09: http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/index.htm

When students are allowed to smoke on public property they give the message to others that smoking is not harmful. When nursing students are allowed to smoke on public property, they create a mixed message about the dangers of smoking to those who look to them for health care information and teaching. SOCC should convey the message that smoking is detrimental to health, that it is not supported on the college campus and that our SOCC students are role models for not smoking because the campus supports the health of our students and our community.

As nursing faculty and health care providers, we strongly encourage the SOCC Board of Education to take a stand on smoking on campus and to ban it from the campus.

Sincerely,

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