

Offering a Tobacco Cessation Class

Case Study: Portland Community College

Professor Jon Gieber is chair of the Alcohol and Drug Counseling Program at Portland Community College. He became a facilitator for the American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking program in 2008 with the idea of facilitating his own smoking cessation course at PCC. The Freedom From Smoking class is dedicated to supporting smokers during the process of quitting. The Freedom from Smoking course became the basis for the course Mr. Gieber taught at Portland Community College Cascade Campus. The class encourages people to quit through social support, weighing pro's and con's of quitting, teaching self management skills, focusing on motivation and inspiration for the group as well as exploring the transitional stages of becoming a nonsmoker.

During fall 2008 eleven students (recruited from the Alcohol & Drug Counseling program) started the freedom from smoking class Stop Smoking Now. The class was offered as a credit class and financial aid was available to the students. Eight to nine students finished the course. All of them became non-smokers thanks to the support the class and Mr. Gieber offered.

The following term, the course was offered as a non credit community education course. The class was cancelled due to a lack of enrollment. Mr. Gieber spoke with some of the students concerning enrollment. He found the students were not able afford the no-credit class without financial aid. Enrolling in a non-credit class does not allow use of financial aid. People who use tobacco may not have the resources to quit due to lack of insurance or social support. The class has not been offered since.

Lessons Learned: A tobacco cessation class offered at a college may be more likely to succeed if it is offered for credit rather than as a noncredit course.

Mr. Gieber believes if the class is offered for credit he could easily have twenty or more students enrolled. The first fall term the class was offered he had 23 students enrolled. With this much interest already and with a bit of class promotion, PCC could have more tobacco free students. According to a survey of Oregon community college students, 59% of students who smoke said they tried to quit in the past year. Portland Community College serves 86,000 students annually and became tobacco-free fall 2009.

For more information [contact us](#) and for additional resources visit www.tobaccofreecollege.org.