

City University's 23 Campuses Are the Latest to Ban Smoking



Yana Paskova for The New York Times

By LISA W. FODERARO
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Last summer, the [University at Buffalo](#) banned [smoking](#) on its three campuses. Last month, [Columbia University](#) approved a measure that prohibits smoking within 20 feet of buildings.

And on Monday, the trustees of the [City University of New York](#), the largest urban higher-education system in the country, voted to forbid smoking on all 23 of its campuses, from the College of Staten Island to [Lehman College](#) in the Bronx.

CUNY's move is the latest in a wave of comprehensive smoking bans on college campuses nationwide, a trend that began about five years ago and has gathered momentum in recent months. The American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation, a nonprofit advocacy group, reported this month that at least [466 campuses](#) had completely banned smoking or passed resolutions to do so.

Unhealthy habits, from keg parties to all-nighters, have long been associated with the college experience. All the more reason for the prohibitions, say proponents of the bans and public health experts, who feel that the campus antismoking rules send an important early message to young people about healthy lifestyles.

"It makes a lot of sense," said Cynthia Hallett, executive director of the nonsmokers' foundation, which is based in Berkeley, Calif. "My daughter is going off to college this year, and the campus is a student's new home and work and play environment."

CUNY officials, who estimate that 13 percent of their students, faculty members and staff members smoke tobacco, noted that the ban was prompted in part by the recent creation of the university's School of Public Health. Campuses will have until September 2012 to impose the rules, allowing them time to mount educational campaigns, post no-smoking signs and provide counselors trained in helping smokers quit.

But campuses are free to forbid smoking before that deadline, said Alexandra W. Logue, CUNY's executive vice chancellor and university provost. Dr. Logue, who has a background in experimental [psychology](#), said the new restrictions could impel smokers to give up the

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habit. "The more you can remove cues in the environment that are associated with that addiction, the less craving the smoker will feel," she said.

[John Jay College of Criminal Justice](#), a CUNY school that will expand its complex on the West Side of Manhattan in the fall, will prohibit smoking on a planned rooftop commons. The landscaped space, with grassy areas and benches, will stretch over most of a block.

Karen Kaplowitz, a professor of literature at John Jay, is a former smoker who served on the advisory task force that recommended the CUNY smoking restriction. "Before this ban, we would have had to permit smoking," she said. "But now we're going to have a beautiful, tobacco-free campus in the middle of Manhattan that is unthreatened by cigarette smoke and butts."

Some of CUNY's most urban colleges, like Hunter and Baruch in Manhattan, may not notice much of a difference, since the university cannot prohibit smoking on public sidewalks. The ban will be felt more on campuses with ample green space between buildings, like City College, [Queens College](#), College of Staten Island and Lehman College.

Reaction to the restrictions did not fall along predictable lines on Monday. At City College, where students hurried between buildings in the bitter cold, Dan Cardillo, a sophomore from Greenwich, Conn., criticized the new rule, even though he does not smoke himself.

"I think it's a stupid thing to do," he said. "It's a college campus. We should be treated like adults. If it's not illegal, they should not ban it here."

His classmate Jennifer Santiago, a senior from the Bronx who smokes half a pack of [cigarettes](#) a day, supported the ban. "I kind of agree with it even though I'm a smoker — for the sake of other people not breathing secondhand smoke," she said. "People got used to the idea by not smoking in bars."

If city officials have their way, large swaths of the five boroughs will soon join the CUNY campuses. City Councilwoman Gale A. Brewer sponsored a bill in September that would ban smoking in 1,700 parks and along 14 miles of beaches. On Monday, she said that the mayoral and Council staffs were still working on the final details, but that the measure could go before the Council for a vote next month.

At the University at Buffalo, the largest institution in the [State University of New York](#) system, the decision to ban smoking on the three campuses, covering more than 1,350 acres, followed a restriction on smoking within 100 feet of buildings. Joseph A. Brennan, a spokesman for the university, said that professors at the School of Public Health and Health Professions and alumni in the medical profession were "a driving force" behind the complete ban.

"As an educator of future physicians, we teach our students to encourage their patients not to use tobacco," he said. "So we should walk our talk and ban ourselves."

Nate Schweber contributed reporting.

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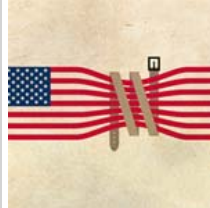
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