



Gwynedd Mercy  
University

*Office of the President*

## *Memo*

**To:** Faculty, Staff and Students  
**From:** Kathleen Owens *ko*  
**Date:** March 1, 2017  
**Subject:** Healthy Campus Initiative

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As you know, we've long been focused on providing quality education that supports the intellectual, spiritual, moral, and physical health and safety of our students. That's why I'm excited to announce that we are adding an important component to our **Healthy Campus Initiative**.

**Effective August 1, 2017, GMercyU will join nearly 1,800 other college and university campuses across the country in going completely tobacco and smoke-free.** This new policy (attached) prohibits the use of all tobacco and smoke-inducing products in all GMercyU campus locations, including the parking areas. It applies to all students, faculty, staff, coaches, contractors, vendors and other visitors on campus. The decision to go smoke-free was based on requests from our Student Government Association, and is in keeping with our commitment to promoting healthy and environmentally-responsible living on campus.

We fully recognize that some members of our campus community smoke, and we are not preventing them from doing so. However, we are prohibiting smoking and the use of any tobacco product on University grounds, including within University vehicles and personal vehicles when parked on any of our campuses. We will provide a list of smoking-cessation programs and other resources for those members of our community who wish to quit smoking between now and the time the policy goes into effect on August 1st. Please check the University Portal and Website for more information on available resources.

The Tobacco-Free policy is intended to eliminate exposure to second-hand smoke, provide an environment supportive of tobacco-free lifestyles, and eliminate the environmental impact of cigarette litter. It will join a growing number of other health and wellness initiatives, including our Annual Health & Wellness Fair on April 5th; a new and rapidly-growing intramural sports and recreation program; one-credit fitness classes; an on-campus bike share program; and healthy eating options, including the use of organic and locally-sourced foods as often as possible within our dining facilities. We also see this policy as an important part of our commitment to the environment – one of the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. It will join the many environmental initiatives already in place to reduce waste and improve the quality of our air, including the use of organic cleaners, adding hydration stations in strategic locations throughout campus to reduce plastic bottle waste and litter, and eliminating the use of trays in our dining hall, just to name a few.

In just a few short months, we will be honoring the success of another group of *Distinctive Mercy Graduates* and forging a path forward to our next academic year. I want to thank you again for your commitment to and involvement in Gwynedd Mercy University, and express my deep appreciation for your anticipated support for the latest addition to our **Healthy Campus Initiative**.

Best wishes.



## Tobacco-Free Campus Policy and Procedures

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to create a healthy and sustainable environment for the entire University community (all locations) by becoming 100 percent tobacco free. Guidelines are provided for the implementation of a policy prohibiting tobacco use on all locations of Gwynedd Mercy University.

### 2. Background

There is considerable evidence that concentrations of smoke are harmful to non-smokers as well as smokers. Findings of the Surgeon General indicate that tobacco use in any form, active and passive, is a significant health hazard. As a Mercy institution, Gwynedd Mercy University has a responsibility to its employees and students to provide an atmosphere that is consistent with the University's commitment to promote healthy lifestyle choices within an environment that encourages wellness. As part of this commitment, all University locations will become a tobacco-free campus as of August 1, 2017.

The Tobacco-Free policy is intended to eliminate exposure to second-hand smoke, provide an environment supportive of tobacco-free lifestyles, and eliminate the environmental impact of cigarette litter. It applies to all faculty, staff, students, visitors, contractors and their employees.

### 3. Policy

- A. Effective August 1, 2017, the use of tobacco products (including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco and any other tobacco products) by anyone including students, staff and visitors, contractors and their employees are prohibited at all University locations.
- B. The use of tobacco products (including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco or any other tobacco products) is prohibited:
  - In the interior spaces of all University locations
  - On all outside property of all University locations or spaces being used by or on behalf of the University, including partially enclosed areas such as walkways and doorways
  - In University vehicles, including vans and all other University vehicles or vehicles being used for University purposes
  - Personal vehicles parked on Gwynedd Mercy University property
  - In all indoor and outdoor athletic facilities being used by or on behalf of the University
  - All locations, other buildings, facilities, or grounds leased or used by Gwynedd Mercy University.
- C. Littering the campus with remains of tobacco products or any other disposable product is prohibited.
- D. Organizers and attendees at public or private events, such as conferences, meetings, public lectures, social events, cultural events, and sporting events using University facilities will be required to abide by the tobacco-free policy and procedure. Organizers of events are responsible for communicating the policy to attendees.

#### 4. Procedure

##### A. Education and Awareness

The implementation of this policy is augmented by an education and awareness campaign that may include but not be limited to:

- Notification to prospective students and staff/faculty
- Informational meetings, postings, and email notifications
- Publications in staff/faculty human resources manuals, student guides and handbooks, and appropriate websites
- Educational campaigns employing classmates and colleagues
- Ongoing smoking cessation programs
- Establish culture of compliance.

##### B. Communication of Policy

Signs bearing the message “Tobacco-Free Campus” will be posted in prominent spaces to include University vehicles and parking lots. However, tobacco-free zones apply to the grounds around all University campuses whether or not signs are posted. No ashtrays or smoking shelters will be provided at any location of Gwynedd Mercy University.

##### C. Tobacco Cessation Programs

The University is committed to supporting all students and employees who wish to stop using tobacco products. Assistance to students, faculty and staff to overcome addiction to tobacco products is available through Human Resources and the Health & Wellness Center. Referrals to cessation services are encouraged.

##### D. Compliance

As members of a learning community, dedicated to integrity in word and deed and social responsibility with a special care for the earth and the common good, all Gwynedd Mercy University students, faculty, staff, contractors and visitors are expected to comply with this policy. Additionally, all are invited to respectfully inform others about the policy in an ongoing effort to enhance awareness and encourage a healthy culture and environment.

The Community is asked to remind any faculty, staff, student, visitor, contractor or guest who is using tobacco on University property about the University’s Tobacco-Free Policy.

It is our expectation that all will comply out of respect for one another as well as for the environment. As an institution that is a premiere educator in the field of healthcare, this policy flows from our mission and core values and the social teaching of the Catholic Church. Integrity of word and deed compels us to “walk the talk” and to promote a policy that focuses on the common good and well-being, rather than individual practices.

*Information adapted from the Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation,  
Delaware County Community College and <http://tobaccofreecampus.org/campus-list-progress>*