Considerations in Implementing Smoke-free / Tobacco-free Campus Policies

Why consider strengthening a tobacco use policy? Several possible reasons:
- Ensure protection from secondhand smoke exposure
- Support employees who want to quit
- Make it less attractive for new employees to start smoking
- Take a stand for improved employee health and against this major source of preventable disease and premature death
- Create potential to influence worker's comp, absenteeism, health care cost trends

Range of policy options:
- One policy applies to everyone, everywhere
- Policy variation based on owned or leased space
- Tiered policy (different policies apply to different locations, based on history, location, workforce)
- Address smoking only or include smokeless tobacco
- Smoke-free campus policy comes in many variations:
    - include or exclude cars parked on company property,
    - restrict smoking to one designated outdoor location away from doors and commonly used walkways
    - include or exclude public walkways and boulevards

Primary planning tasks, after deciding on a policy and an effective date:
- Prepare employees (and others) for this change via advance communications.
- Decide how the policy will be enforced.
- Consider extra assistance for smokers who want to quit during a transition period.
- Enlist assistance from facilities (for signage, removal of ashtrays, identification of property lines, possible provision of containers, etc.)

Keys to a successful transition:
- Top leadership commitment: the essential ingredient!
- Tell employees why you are doing this.
- Offer employees a chance to respond / vent / question.
- Make sure everyone who smokes knows what quitting assistance is available.
- Reassure everyone who smokes that this change does not mean that anyone has to quit smoking.
- Educate managers and supervisors so they can help employees understand.
- Dedicated staff. This needs to be someone's priority for a few months.