WELCOME
CLASS OF 2021
By JESSE BERNSTEIN
MANAGING EDITOR

Students and staff can now only smoke in designated areas, per the official rollout of UR's tobacco ban last Tuesday. And so far, it's been a smooth transition.

"In fact we are seeing good compliance," said Director of Public Safety Mark Fischer.

The ban, announced by University President Joel Seligman last year, includes the 30 feet surrounding all buildings on the River Campus, which previously had been the outer boundary for smokers.

The policy has received some push-back — from fiery Facebook discussion to IMPACT petitions — but its advocates believe it will be a success.

"With all of the effort to move our campus towards a smoke-free environment and now in the initial stages of implementation, I see a successful long-term outcome even though we will all have to adapt to the change," said senior Rebecca Block, who serves on the Student Health Advisory Committee.

And according to Tristan Ford, another committee member who graduated in May, the policy does indeed reflect the desires of the student body.

"UHS conducts regular surveys that have consistently found the majority of students would prefer either a completely tobacco-free campus or at least a campus with smoking restricted to designated smoking areas," he told the Campus Times.

Some of the questions that cropped up in the original discussions on the smoking ban have been left unanswered. Ulrik Soderstrom, who was a member of SA before he graduated in 2016, said that the University Health Services survey used faulty methods that ignored the large segment of the international student community that smokes, in addition to campus workers who smoke.

"The ban is a disgrace to students voices, the University staff's voices, and will go unimplemented," he said.

The policy will be applied to all University properties, including the Eastman School of Music. The Medical Center has been smoke-free since 2006.

This isn't the first time the University has tried to curb smoking on campus. Smoking was banned in campus buildings in 1993 and UHS began building on several existing programs that offer smoking cessation services. If someone is found smoking in a restricted area, they'll be directed to a smoking area.

Bernstein is a member of the class of 2018.
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