

TO: The Earlham Community

FROM: Doug Bennett

RE: Tobacco Smoking at Earlham

DATE: August 17, 2006

This summer, the U.S. Surgeon General released a report on “The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke.” The report details the significant health dangers of exposure to secondhand smoke. The report concludes that “there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke.” And it says “Eliminating smoking in indoor spaces fully protects nonsmokers from exposure to secondhand smoke. Separating smokers from non-smokers, cleaning the air, and ventilating buildings cannot eliminate exposures of nonsmokers to secondhand smoke.”

You can see the whole report (727 pages) or its executive summary (27 pages) at: <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/secondhandsmoke/>

With this recent authoritative report in hand, from today forward Earlham will not allow smoking indoors in any building, nor on any of the porches of any buildings.

This is a change from the Smoking Policy approved in the spring of 2005, which says the following about smoking indoors:

“Smoking is not permitted inside any building on the Earlham campus including residential facilities, academic buildings, libraries and athletic facilities. The one exception to this policy is the indoor smoking room currently known as Tazza located in the Runyan Center basement.”

We will replace this statement with the following:

“Smoking is not permitted inside any building on the Earlham campus including residential facilities, academic buildings, libraries and athletic facilities. Smoking is also not permitted on any of the covered porches of Earlham buildings.”

No longer will we allow smoking in Tazza, on the porches of residence halls, or on the porches of other Earlham buildings (library, LBC, Stout, etc.). Will this inconvenience smokers? Yes. But it will also protect the health of students, faculty, staff and visitors.

I plan to discuss this matter with the Committee on Campus Life (CCL), which drafted our current smoking policy. In the future, in considering whether and where to allow smoking on campus, we must be sure that only those who choose to smoke (or who choose to be in the presence of those who smoke) will be subjected to second hand smoke. I will also ask CCL to consider how we should use the Tazza space from now on.