

Quo Vadis Newspaper

College Assembly Votes to Ban Electronic Cigarettes on Campus

Tejal Sarbaugh, April 2, 2014

The College Assembly met for the second time this semester in L'Hommedieu Hall in the Rose M. Channing Danzis Amphitheater at 2 p.m. on Thursday, March 6.

A policy on e-cigarettes needed to be discussed, and the possibility for more computer labs and bandwidth was also considered.

The College Assembly had its Student Chairpersons, Tara Canavera and Elijah Villapiano, present at the meeting.

After calling the Assembly to order, Jeremy Nickerson, professor of communication and chairman, reminded the forum that the bylaws were still suspended from the Feb. 6 meeting. He said they will remain so until the Bylaw Task force completes their present charges,

Nickerson asked for the committee and task force reports to be read.

Dr. Tom Halasinski, co-chairman of the Campus Life and Community Concerns Task Force, came forward to present a recommendation concerning e-cigarettes. He acknowledged his other co-chairman Villapiano. Halasinski said "The task force will investigate the need for a policy regarding the use of electronic cigarettes in the classroom and campus."

Halasinski believes there is a need for a policy since the usage of these "e-cigarettes" is increasing on campus. They recommended the prohibition of the devices in classrooms and other outside locations on campus, treating them the same as tobacco cigarettes. He said that this is a safety concern of inhaling these chemicals for the students, faculty, and staff. He also said that these devices are against the law in workplaces in some areas of New Jersey and New York due to the same health concerns.

"Our main concern about these devices is the safety of these devices," he said.

He said the contents of these electronic cigarettes contain propylene glycol, glycerin, water, and nicotine and sometimes added flavoring solution.

The members offered their opinions.

"It's very clear nicotine is addictive, and it's not a good idea for students to use it," said one assemblyman.

One Assemblywoman said that she tried using the device to quit smoking, and found she was more addicted to cigarettes.

Halasinski said that there have been some stories of people who have successfully quit smoking using e-cigarettes, but the task force believes more studies are needed. One assemblywoman disagreed with the recommendation and said, "I think it could provide a helpful transition to quit smoking. And if you're going to outlaw a fear of nicotine, are you going to do the same thing with Nicorette gum and patches?"

Halasinski said that it is not only the nicotine addiction that is a concern, but also the inhalation of glycerin from the e-cigarettes. The prohibition, he said, is “out of great concern for the health of everyone” on campus.

The recommendation was passed in the assembly, and e-cigarettes are prohibited in classrooms and on campus.

Professor Mary-Pat Maciolek, chairman of the Educational Resources Task Force, announced their progress on a charge left over from 18 months ago. Due to snow days, many of the Assembly meetings were postponed. Recommendations are needed to determine the need for more computer laboratory space and the bandwidth for social media, music and video downloading sites.

She presented two recommendations that had been suggested in the previous assemblies. One recommendation was to “...limit the use of social networking to specific computer labs at Middlesex County College.”

The second one was to provide more labs for students’ academic needs that would be open when the other computer laboratories would be closed.

Maciolek said her task force decided it best that these recommendations not be voted today. She said that the task force will consider some other options.

Professor Nickerson came forward and announced new course changes and prerequisite changes in some culinary, dietetic technology, and dental courses this semester.

The public had no questions or comments, therefore the Assembly was adjourned. The College Assembly meets the first Thursday of every month in the Amphitheater in L’Hommedieu Hall at 2p.m.

<http://www.quovadisnewspaper.com/front-page/college-assembly-votes-to-ban-electronic-cigarettes-on-campus-1.3156355?pagereq=1>