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By Eric McCandless, Hallmark Channel

Teri Polo: To star in Fox's *The Wedding Bells*.

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# More colleges banning smoking

## Trend now reaching bigger universities

By Emily Bazar  
USA TODAY

Colleges are snuffing out smoking everywhere on campus, even in outdoor light-up spots such as main quads and sidewalks.

At least 43 campuses from California to New Jersey have gone smoke-free, a trend that is accelerating, according to Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights. Most have been community colleges and commuter schools, but more large universities with student housing are debating campus-wide bans, says the group's Bronson Frick.

"We want our institution to make a statement about doing the right things when it comes to good health," says Chuck Kupchella, president of the 13,000-student University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. He intends to transform UND into a tobacco-free zone. "Smokers still will have rights, but just not on our campus."

Nearly 31% of full-time college students smoke, compared with about 25% of the overall population, according to the federal government's 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

Students form life-long habits in college, so reducing their exposure to cigarettes may have a lasting effect, says Betsy Foy of the American College Health Association. "If you're not allowed to smoke on campus, if you can't buy tobacco products on campus, it will definitely deter some students from smoking," she says.

At Indiana University in Bloomington, some students are opposing a proposal to make all eight IU campuses smoke-free. Two have been since August.

Last month, the *Indiana Daily Student* called the proposal an "infringement on personal liberties," especially for students in dorms. Smoking already is prohibited inside and 30 feet around dorms, says IU spokeswoman Susan Williams. A full ban could bar students from smoking in dorm parking lots.

"I can vote for president of the United States. I can go to war," says sophomore Alex Wukmer, 19, who smokes about a pack a day. "But I can't necessarily smoke a cigarette because they're afraid I'll make a bad choice?"

At UND, Kupchella has won support from staff and faculty groups. Last Sunday, the student government voted for his plan. "It seems like it's the right way to go," says Nathan Martindale, student body president.

Youngstown State University in Ohio implemented a policy in December that allows smoking only in surface parking lots and on sidewalks adjacent to roads.

There have been violators, but the school is focused more on informing people than enforcing the policy, says spokesman Ron Cole. "We're not going to have the smoking police out there handcuffing students and employees," he says.

At the University of Iowa, a committee of staff, faculty and students recommended in November that the campus go smoke-free as early as July 2009.

Susan Johnson, an associate provost, says the 30,000-student school is preparing for an intense debate. "Our goal here is not to coerce individuals to give up smoking," she says. "Our goal is reduce the amount of secondhand smoke everybody is exposed to."



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University of North Dakota

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