

6-1-2013

# Education program makes Council on Teacher Quality honor roll

Furman University

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### Recommended Citation

University, Furman (2013) "Education program makes Council on Teacher Quality honor roll," *Furman Magazine*: Vol. 56 : Iss. 2 , Article 13.

Available at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine/vol56/iss2/13>

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## University considers proposal to become tobacco free

A SEVEN-MEMBER COMMITTEE has recommended that Furman adopt a tobacco-free policy beginning with the 2014-15 academic year. The proposal, if approved, would prohibit the use of all forms of tobacco, including smokeless products, on university property.

The group, chaired by Jeff Redderson, associate vice president for facilities services, began studying the issue last year after the university received complaints about exposure to secondhand smoke. The committee included representatives from the faculty, administrative staff and student body.

Redderson says that roughly 15 percent of faculty and staff and 5 percent of students reported using tobacco products more than three times per week.

The university banned smoking in all campus buildings in 1993. The ban was extended in 2007 to include smoking within 25 feet of building entrances. Students were still allowed to smoke on the balconies of residence halls.

A series of forums will likely be held this fall to gather input on the proposed policy change, says Redderson.

Among institutions of higher learning in South Carolina, Charleston Southern, Converse, Lander, Medical University of South Carolina, Southern Wesleyan, University of South Carolina-Upstate, York Technical College and Piedmont Technical College have banned all forms of tobacco use on their campuses, and Clemson University has formed a committee to study the matter. More than 825 U.S. colleges and universities are tobacco free.

Redderson says research gathered by the committee indicates that healthcare costs are 40 percent higher for smokers, and that smoke-free policies on campuses help decrease tobacco consumption.

“There are many health, economic and environmental benefits from having a tobacco-free environment,” states the recommendation. “The committee recognizes that it is Furman’s responsibility to actively engage our campus community in accepting responsibility for improving our environment, beginning with our campus.”

— JOHN ROBERTS

*Reprinted from Inside Furman, the internal campus newsletter. The author is the university’s director of communications.*

## Education program makes Council on Teacher Quality honor roll

IF YOU’RE LOOKING for a top teacher education program, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) reports that Furman’s is among the best.

Furman was one of only four universities in the nation to receive a top rating from NCTQ for its undergraduate secondary teacher education program. The NCTQ’s Teacher Prep Review gave Furman, Vanderbilt, Lipscomb and Ohio State universities four-star ratings for combining “an eye for the talent teachers need, strong content knowledge preparation, and well-structured opportunities to practice the craft of teaching.”

In addition, Furman was the only school in South Carolina to have both its elementary and secondary programs make the review’s honor roll. NCTQ assigned ratings of 0 to 4 stars to 1,200 teacher education programs; to make the honor roll, programs had to earn at least three stars. Twenty-one elementary programs (4 percent of



those rated) and 84 secondary programs (14 percent) qualified for the honor roll, including the undergraduate secondary programs at Clemson University, College of Charleston and the University of South Carolina.

Nelly Hecker, chair of the education

department, says Furman “owes its strength to outstanding faculty who engage teacher candidates in practices supported by empirical evidence, and to strong partnerships with public school districts that provide excellent mentors. The retention of our graduates in the field of education has dramatically increased since we extended our teacher preparation program to a fifth year of study, giving our candidates more time to enroll in content courses and more time to teach under the guidance of master practitioners and mentors.”

The Furman program is known for its high entrance and exit standards. After four years of study, elementary teacher candidates are required to spend an additional semester completing a teaching internship. The university graduates 30 to 50 teacher candidates each year.

*Learn more at [nctq.org](http://nctq.org).*