

Cigarette grant raises legitimacy questions

● Doctors at Bowman Gray are receiving \$1 million from R.J. Reynolds Tobacco to study the health effects of a new cigarette.

The Associated Press

WINSTON-SALEM — Researchers are defending a \$1 million grant from R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. to study a new low-smoke cigarette, saying the money's source won't mean skewing results in the company's favor.

Doctors at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine are studying the health effects of the new Eclipse cigarette with one of the largest research grants ever given to the school.

The researchers say they have taken every precaution to guarantee their academic freedom. But some doctors believe physicians risk becoming the unwilling pawns of tobacco companies when they accept such funding.

"It ultimately seems like there's unavoidably a conflict of interest," said Dr. Wain White, a pathologist at Bowman Gray.

"If the scientists are left to their free will, it will not hurt the science. But even if that's the case, it always has the appearance of being tainted," White said.

Researchers will look at the lungs and circulatory systems of 25 healthy adult smokers when they switch from smoking a pack a day of regular cigarettes to Eclipse. The medical school started recruiting participants this month.

The American Medical Association has asked medical schools to stop accepting research grants from tobacco companies.

"We don't think that medical institutions have any business taking research money from tobacco companies or from research institutes that the industry has set up," said

Dr. Thomas Houston, the AMA's director of preventive medicine. "The reasons are pretty obvious in that the profits that pay for this research come from the illness and death of our patients."

Dr. David Bass, a lung disease specialist at Bowman Gray and research leader, said the study does not aim to determine whether Eclipse is a safer cigarette.

Reynolds Tobacco, which is based in Winston-Salem, has signed an agreement promising not to misquote the research or take the results out of context, Bass said.

"We own the data. That means we do with the data what we as scientists see as appropriate no matter what it says. If Reynolds or anyone else doesn't like the results, that's their problem," he said. "I think the real test is not where the money comes from but whether you can be assured the science is pristine."

Bass wants to see whether lung and heart damage doctors see in smokers is due to the tar or other substances in cigarette smoke. Eclipse heats tobacco instead of burning it and produces very little tar.

The Reynolds grant to Bowman Gray is one of five grants to researchers at medical schools. The University of British Columbia is another. Nat Walker, a Reynolds Tobacco spokesman, declined to name the other schools.

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Sponsor	Campus	Number of Awards	Total Awards Amount
Philip Morris U.S.A	Berkeley	2	\$1,170,871
Philip Morris U.S.A	Davis	9	\$4,853,732
Philip Morris U.S.A	Los Angeles	5	\$8,336,057
Philip Morris U.S.A	San Diego	3	\$1,494,613

University of California Regents Delay Vote...Again

The University of California (UC) Regents were scheduled to vote on RE-89 - a policy restricting University acceptance of funding from the tobacco industry - at their January 2007 meeting. The proposed policy is being sponsored by Regent John Moores of San Diego and is heavily supported by the Chair of the Regents Richard Blum of San Francisco.

At the January meeting, the Committee on Finance discussed RE-89 and voted to delay the vote on the policy in order to get feedback from the Academic Senate (faculty leadership) on the language of the policy. The Regents asked the Academic Senate for an up or down vote on RE-89, input from the faculty on RE-89, and clarification on the broader issue of academic freedom in relation to tobacco industry funding of research. The Regents asked the faculty to supply them with this information at the May 2007 meeting.

Academic Senate Vote

On February 26th RE-89 was sent out to Systemwide Senate Committees Chairs and Divisional Senate Chairs for review. The Committee and Divisional Senate Chairs were asked "whether or not RE-89 should be endorsed or opposed by the Academic Senate?" All comments were requested back to the Academic Council by April 13th.

Each Committee and Divisional Senate Chair received a one-page cover letter from Chair John

Oakley and the text of RE-89 to assist in the review. The scope of the review was only to provide the Council and the Assembly with feedback in order to provide an "up or down" vote on RE-89. Senate representatives were not asked to provide feedback on how RE-89 could be altered to better address the concerns of the Regents.

A total of 17 bodies were sent RE-89 for review and feedback. Of these bodies, seven Standing Committees of the Academic Senate and nine of the ten Divisions submitted feedback to the Academic Council. One Divisional Senate (UCSF) voted in favor, 15 voted against, and 1 (UC Merced) abstained from the vote.

The three main arguments against RE-89 were academic freedom, slippery slope, and "the University has policies in place to address breaches in research integrity".

In May, the Assembly of the Academic Senate voted in opposition to RE-89 with a vote of 43 opposed to RE-89, 4 in favor of RE-89, and 3 abstentions.

RE-89 Vote

Due to Regent Moores' absence at the May meeting, the Regents voted to delay the vote on RE-89. The Regents are scheduled to vote on RE-89 at their next meeting on Wednesday, July 18 at UC Santa Barbara.

For more information on the issue or the Campaign, please visit www.academic-integrity.com.

UC Davis and Tobacco Money

In the June 21 issue of the Sacramento News and Review, the cover story looked at tobacco industry funding of research at UC Davis. The writer of the story dug through over 2,000 internal tobacco industry documents and University documents to reveal a 35-year relationship between the tobacco industry and UC Davis sensory scientists.

[Read the full article.](#)

