This study seeks to examine the political development, legislative enactment, and government enforcement of the intended Russian public smoking ban. This new law, in effect since June 1, 2013, has made it illegal for people to smoke in universities, schools, government buildings, and outside metro stations in a country where smoking is ubiquitous.\(^1\) This past summer, after receiving a Weinberg URG to travel to Moscow, I successfully conducted interviews with policymakers and academics to try to understand the political motivation behind this law, how this law was enacted, and what effects its enforcement is expected to have on the habits and daily lives of Russian citizens. To quantify my analysis, I conducted a highly focused case study at three different universities in Moscow, where I conducted a survey of over 300 Russian students examining student perception of the law, its actual enforcement, and its measured effects on student smoking behavior.\(^2\) However, provisions for enforcement of the law had not yet been passed by parliament (the Duma), and I found that the ban was having virtually no effect on smokers’ habits. On November, 15, 2013, the provisions for enforcement will go into effect, and it is essential that I conduct my survey again and see what effect the provisions for enforcement will have on the enforcement of the law and on smokers’ habits. This study will provide insight into the current politics of Russian health regulation – investigating a government edict putatively intended to mitigate a widespread habit reducing the life expectancy – and future economic and political influence – of the Russian nation. Furthermore, this study, which I am using as the basis for my Honors Thesis in Political Science, will be a marker for future political analyses of Russian social legislation, the importance of enforcement in changing social behavior, and will provide a statistical window into the effectiveness of critical domestic policymaking and its enforcement in Russia.

Ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia has had terrible governance issues concerning health and poverty. Russia’s population has decreased by at least five million people over this time period. According to 2010 statistics from the World Health Organization (WHO), 60% of men and 22% of women regularly smoke in Russia.\(^3\) The average life expectancy in Russia for men is only 62 years, which is one of the lowest rates in Europe, while 400,000 people a year die from smoking-related illnesses.\(^4\) This Russian political demography ostensibly led the Russian legislative body, the Duma, to draft legislation to curb smoking. This law, which went into effect on June 1, 2013, makes it illegal to smoke in universities, schools, subway and railroad stations, and government offices. An English translation of Article 12.1.1 of the law states, “To prevent exposure to environmental tobacco smoke on health, tobacco smoking is prohibited… in the territories and in the spaces intended for the provision of education services, cultural institutions and agencies of the Youth.”\(^5\) However, the Russian Duma only just passed the provisions for enforcement of the law in October, and the police will be able to fine violators of the law starting November 15, 2013.

The study that I plan to conduct is necessarily new and original, as the law has just gone into effect this past summer and the provisions for enforcement will have just gone into effect by the time I conduct my survey. Even so, despite the novelty of this law in Russia, similar bans on smoking have been implemented in Italy, France, and, most recently, the Ukraine.\(^6\) To provide context for my work, I have done research on these bans and the studies that have been done regarding their enactment, enforcement, and effects. In addition, many have written on effective ways for governments to regulate and change norms, and some relevant literature exists on what drives civilians to either comply or not comply with laws. The literature currently offers contradictory ideas on what is the most effective way a government can alter the behavior of its
people, and my research will attempt to provide insight into what makes a ban effective, and the extent to which perceived enforcement or lack of enforcement affects compliance.

My research agenda will explore the effectiveness of enforcement on changing popular habits. If I return to Russia and conduct my survey again, I will be able to isolate the independent variable of enforcement, to determine how it affects the dependent variable of the effect of the law on people’s habits, which no study has ever done before; laws that have been enacted before have had multiple components, including price increases, advertising restrictions, and have always had provisions for enforcement.

In order to address this issue, I will conduct a case study at Moscow State University, People’s Friendship University of Russia, and Russian State University for the Humanities, measuring student attitudes towards the ban, their experience with its enforcement, and the ban's effects on their smoking habits. I already have very interesting results from conducting my survey this summer, and now it is vital that I conduct the same survey now that it will be possible for the law to be enforced. This summer, once school was in session, I managed to conduct over 300 surveys of student smokers by walking up to individuals on campus and talking to them. Also, it is important to note that school will be in session again during my entire stay in Moscow, as Russian students have their winter break in the second half of January. Most of the students were willing to talk to me, and it was easy to find and talk to a lot of smokers, as they tended to gather in clusters in certain places on the campuses of these universities.

My academic study of Russian politics and my intense language preparation in the Russian language at Northwestern over the past two years will provide me with the tools to carry out this project. I have already successfully conducted this survey and I am certain that I can do it again. I have also done interviews with many experts on the issue in Moscow, all of who have said they would be willing to speak with me again at anytime to supplement my survey with expert analysis of the situation. These experts include Irina Denisova and Polina Kuznetsova at the Centre for Economic and Financial Research (CEFIR), Nataliya Toropova from the WHO, Dmitry Yanin from the Confederation of Consumer Societies, Daria Khaltourina from Tobacco Free Kids, and Artur Demchuk from Moscow State University. I have also begun the IRB process, and completed CITI training.

Once I have completed my research, I plan to write an Honors Thesis in the Political Science department on my research and what my findings can tell us about the effectiveness of this new ban on public smoking. The effectiveness of this law will have implications for the stricter ban on smoking that will go into effect June 1, 2014 that extends the ban to restaurants and cafes. Conducting this project and writing my Honors Thesis will be a good experience for me, as I plan on pursuing a career related to Russia and policymaking. With this project, I hope to produce a well-formed analysis of the causes and effects of this new Russian law that will provide insight into policymaking and the future politics of demographic sustainability in Russia.

2 See appendices for survey.
See appendices.

Appendix A:

Bibliography


Appendix B:

Questionnaire For Students