

Healthy Vending Policy – Elevator Pitch

The UC Healthy Vending Policy was developed to provide consistent guidelines for all UC's to follow. The policy establishes nutrition criteria based on extensive research and federal level nutrition standards to provide for more nutritious and healthful vending options. Typical vending selections tend to be low in nutritional value and high in calories, fat, salt, and sugar. The ready availability of such unhealthy food and beverages is compounded on college campuses where students and employees are already at an elevated risk of poor dietary behaviors. In 2013, UCLA conducted a pilot study increasing the number of healthful options in vending machines and more consumers selected the healthy options without sales negatively impacting the bottom line profits for these machines. The study showed that “making the healthy choice, the easy choice” was a win-win for both consumers and the university.

The policy does not eliminate “less healthy” options, but sets standards for what is considered healthy and ensures that each machine include healthy options. In this way, the policy helps increase access to healthy foods and beverages and provides more choices for our campus community. The policy uses a phased-in approach that allows locations to adopt the new criteria as existing vending contracts expire, and sets two easily achievable benchmarks, one within 1 year of policy adoption (35% of food and 50% of beverages), and the next level (50% of food and 70% of beverages) within 3 years after policy adoption. A policy implementation toolkit is available and provides best practices for stocking the machines and promoting more healthful options.

UC has a long history of being bold, innovative, and pioneering. Adopting a healthy vending policy systemwide is an opportunity for UC to lead by example and advance the health and well-being of our communities.