

Introduction

Alcohol consumption is a conspicuous feature of the higher education landscape. According to national surveys, 9 of 10 college students drink. Of those who drink, 44% do so abusively. In addition to out-of-control drinking, many college student drinkers experience negative consequences due to their drinking such as missing classes, performing poorly academically, physical assault, and financial hardship. According to survey results from over 60,000 college students collected by the Core Institute at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, alcohol use is inversely correlated with academic performance. The Core Institute findings revealed that students who reported earning 4.0 GPAs consumed, on average, 3.1 drinks per week. Students who reported achieving 3.0 GPAs consumed 4.4 drinks per week. “C” average students, 2.0 GPAs, consumed an average of 5.6 drinks per week. Tellingly, students who achieved 1.0 GPAs consumed, on average, 9.5 drinks per week. While it is difficult to prove that alcohol in and of itself *causes* poor academic performance, the Core Institute findings strongly suggest that alcohol consumption affects academic performance negatively. Further, such data suggests that student retention and persistence to graduation may be negatively impacted by alcohol use.

To understand the extent of alcohol or other drug use among UW students, the UW system Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) committee invites over 50,000 UW System students to participate in an alcohol and other drug use survey each biennium. In addition to creating a picture of alcohol and other drug use in the UW System as a whole, each campus receives a report on their respective student alcohol and other drug use.

Briefly, 80% of the UWSP students who participated in the Spring 2005 AODA survey reported using alcohol in the 30 days prior. Of the UWSP students who drink, 60% of them consumed more than five drinks in one sitting in the two weeks prior to the survey. According to the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), more than five drinks in one sitting suggests risky or ‘binge’ drinking. Alcohol is the number one drug of choice for UWSP students. Less than 24% of students reported using tobacco in the 30 days prior to the survey and 14% of UWSP students reported using marijuana in the 30 days prior to the survey. These statistics are not improved from data gathered from the same survey administered to UWSP students in spring of 2004.

In addition to data on alcohol and other drug use, the survey also asks students about consequences that they have experienced in the last year due to their drinking. In general, 69% of students reported experiencing a hangover, 46% reported memory loss, 42% reported missing a class due to drinking, and 38% reported getting into a fight or argument. Unfortunately, reported consequences increased between 2004 and 2005. Memory loss grew by 35%, experiencing fights and arguments increased 27%, incidents of missing class due to drinking rose 8%, and hangover incidences rose 6%. Other significant increases were found among incidences of property damage (increased 57%) and injuries (increased 47%). For more data on student alcohol and drug use, as well as related consequences, review the 2005 UWSP report on student alcohol and drug use in the appendix.

Biennial Review Expectations and External Supporting Resources

In response to the overwhelming negative impact of alcohol on the college population, the Department of Education adopted the Higher Education Act which compelled institutions of

higher education receiving federal funding to develop and adopt alcohol-control programs and policies. In addition to the practical initiatives, campuses are expected to review their respective alcohol and other drug programs to determine effectiveness and review the consistency of sanction enforcement in order to identify and implement any necessary changes. A biennial review report on the campus review of AODA programs and policies is prepared and filed on each respective campus. A comprehensive set of instructions for this process is available through the Higher Education Center's website: www.edc.org/hec/dfsca.

Several state and national resources provided important information used throughout this biennial review. Each resource is included in the appendix.

- UW System Student Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Survey report from a Spring 2005 administration to 1400 UWSP students N=396 (28% response rate).
- *A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges* released by the NIAAA-supported Task Force on College Drinking.
- UW System Strategic Plan for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Prevention Initiatives developed and distributed by the UW System AODA committee in May 2002.
- *Complying With the Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Regulations* published by the Higher Education Center of the Department of Education.

2002-2003 Biennial Review and Recommendations

An important part of the biennial review is the identification and implementation of changes. As such, general discussion of select findings provided in the 2004 report are presented. A review was conducted in 2004, spanning the academic years 2002 and 2003.

1. Establish an effective system for distribution of policy and program information that would include both students and employees. This recommendation was based on evidence suggesting that distribution of policies and program information was inadequate and that notification of health risks and treatment options were also lacking. Distribution of such information is identified as critical to meeting the basic expectations of an AOD prevention program. Related to this comprehensive program was a suggestion to develop a "reader-friendly" document to aid students and employees in learning about AOD programs, services and policies.

2. Establish a systematic process to ensure the consistency of sanction enforcement. An institution of higher education establishes consistent enforcement of sanctions by documenting that the institution of higher education (IHE) treats similarly situated offenders in a similar manner. After reviewing a number of adjudicated cases, the review team perceived inconsistencies across the selection of cases where sanctions were concerned including probationary periods and sanctioned exercises for the student to complete. Related to this recommendation were sub-recommendations including creating a working group to systematically investigate sanctions that would be effective for students. Furthermore, because the Office of Rights and Responsibilities did not use a computerized method for tracking violations, the process of identifying cases for the review was cumbersome, requiring a file by file review, the review team recommended that a comprehensive database be created and adopted to aid in daily file and case management.

3. Establish an effective, campus-wide prevention program based upon scientific research. This recommendation was grounded in programming data that suggested programs did not reach the entire target audience. Further, the effect of programming that did exist, to new students as an example, was not evaluated thereby making it difficult to make suggestions for improvement. Programs for traditionally high-risk groups, such as Greek-letter organizations and athletes, appeared to be episodic and inconsistent. Finally, campus programming as well as training programs for student employees who often deal with alcohol and other drug issues was not based on program recommendations reflected in the NIAAA report of April 2002.

The 2002-2003 Biennial Review Report was filed with the Student Rights and Responsibilities Office in the fall of 2004. The report was presented to the Executive Director for Campus Life for action. There is no evidence to suggest that any action was taken on the recommendations of the 2002-2003 report.

2004-2005 Programs

Members of the biennial review task force represented several important campus departments. Each member brought their perspectives on programming in their respective departments. In general, while alcohol and other drug education programs are offered, few students reportedly take advantage. In addition, the students who are likely to attend, are those for whom alcohol and other drug education is not indicated as they are typically student personnel who have had some training in alcohol and other drug use. Many AOD education efforts are more indirect and use posters and bulletin boards to reach a broader audience. While the team members agreed that getting valuable information about alcohol and other drugs “out there” is important, such programs are not evaluated and their utility is questionable.

Additional comments about programming centered on the campus programs and events that included alcohol or provided access to alcohol. As an example, alcohol was sold at a venue on campus which hosted several programs and recreational activities. Alcohol was provided by campus organizations for events, select concerts, end-of-year banquets and other campus celebrations. Greek-letter organizations involved alcohol in their events, even though these events were purportedly not “sanctioned” organizational events. Additional anecdotal discussion surrounded the availability of alcohol at faculty and staff events. Actual numbers surrounding these events were not collected.

The Student Health Promotion Office (SHPO), within the University Centers, is one programming resource for alcohol and other drug education. During the 4-semester review period, the SHPO presented 75 AODE programs which included campus-wide programs as well as individual hall requests. There were 25 Personal Alcohol-Control through Exploration programs presented for individuals referred through the conduct office. The residence hall population reported a total of 100 programs over the 4 semester review period aimed at alcohol or other drug education and alcohol-free activities. (SHPO programs and residence hall programs are not mutually exclusive—in the absence of a coordinated programming reporting effort, many of the programs reported are duplicated). The content of these programs includes risk reduction, blood alcohol concentration, alcohol poisoning, alcohol dependency, helping friends with problem drinking, sexual assault prevention and education, tobacco education, marijuana education, and alcohol-free alternatives.

All new freshmen attending summer orientation participate in an alcohol education discussion with their respective orientation leaders. This discussion includes alcohol expectancies, UWSP alcohol and other drug use data, and risks associated with alcohol consumption.

Nationally affiliated Greek-letter organizations are required to have risk management programs in place, but data detailing the number, extent, frequency, and effectiveness of AOD education programs was unattainable. There were no concrete AOD education programs for student-athletes. However, mentoring programs have been discussed and the athletic department does review academic progress by student-athletes.

2004-2005 Policy/Enforcement-Sanctioning

In addition to bringing important information about programming, members also brought their perspectives on policy enforcement and sanction in their respective departments. There are AODA policies and procedures for the UWSP campus as outlined in the Community Rights & Responsibilities booklet distributed by the Student Rights & Responsibilities Office. The distribution of this booklet is to residence hall directors, residence hall desks, deans of departments and it is available on-line. In addition, team members identified AODA policies available through following venues:

- Guidepoint—distributed to student leaders and available for sale
- Residence Hall Handbook—distributed in each residence hall room, discussed at floor meetings, referred to in residence hall signage
- Permit to serve alcoholic beverages—available on-line
- NCAA regulations—provided to athletic coaches
- WIAC sport code—provided to athletic coaches
- Advisor manual—available on-line
- Risk management video—shown at risk management trainings
- Community Advisor (CA) manual—contract that CAs must sign, discussed in training

In addition to seeking sources for policy, the team discussed policy enforcement and sanctioning. The Greek-letter organizations used a Judicial board that heard cases of policy violation and determined sanctions. In addition, the Policy and Advisory Committee for Student Organizations (PACSO) is another policy board that heard violations committed by student organizations. The athletic department enforces conference codes, but it appeared that there was inconsistency among the various sports. The largest enforcement effort is through residence halls. Student staff members document incidences of policy violation and each case is heard by a professional staff residence hall director. A significant concern with regard to enforcement included the relationship, or lack thereof, between the city and the campus.

The team also discussed sanctioning of violations. Recently, the Inter-Greek Council was restricted from self-governance. A Greek-life Task Force has been commissioned to study UWSP Greek-letter organizations and make recommendations. The sanctioning in the athletic department is the responsibility of the individual sport and there is no data to support or deny that sanctions are being imposed.

The residence halls have the most structured set of procedures for sanctioning through the Rights and Responsibilities Office. Hall directors have limited authority in sanctioning, but can apply judicial sanctions for student AODA violators.

Policy Violations

Data on AODA violations are kept by both Protective Services and Rights and Responsibilities. Data from Protective Services suggests that in 2004, there were 14 incidences of underage alcohol possession and/or consumption. In 2005, there were 38 incidences of the same violation. In 2004, there were 14 arrests for underage alcohol possession and/or consumption and in 2005 there were 34 arrests for the same violation. Other alcohol offenses in 2004 and 2005 were 3 and 2 respectively.

With regard to controlled substances, in 2004 there were 10 incidences and 6 arrests. In 2005, there were 15 incidences and 9 arrests.

Another charge of the biennial review team is to review sanctions given throughout the review period to ascertain consistency and fairness. Data was prepared by the Rights and Responsibilities Office to assist the committee in performing this task. 50 cases were selected from each of the semesters under review (spring 2004, fall 2004, spring 2005, fall 2005) providing a total of 200 cases. The information received included the semester of the violation, type of violation, conduct codes violated, number of violations for that specific case (1st, 2nd, 3rd), date of violation, date of judicial meeting, and the sanction given. The grid of the raw case data is included in the appendix.

Below is a table featuring a basic analysis of the grid. Discussion follows.

	Spring 2004	Fall 2004	Spring 2005	Fall 2005
Number of cases	50	50	50	50
Type of violations	All involved alcohol; one involved marijuana; four included disorderly conduct.	Most involved alcohol; two involved marijuana; two included disorderly conduct.	Most involved alcohol; two involved marijuana; one involved disorderly conduct.	All involved alcohol; two involved possession of marijuana; one controlled substances
Calendar days between violation and judicial meeting	Ave. 14.42 days. Shortest: 2 days Longest: 85 days Five cases over 30 days.	Ave. 11.44 days shortest: 1 day Longest: 86 days Three cases over 30 days.	Ave: 9.54 days Shortest: 1 Longest: 38 Two cases over 30 days.	Ave: 10.76 days Shortest: 0 days Longest: 55 days Five cases over 30 days.
1 st time violations	34	39	35	39
Sanctions for 1 st time violations	Probation range: 4 – 31 weeks 23 LIVE-PACE (67%) Sanctions: Judicial Educator, papers, community service, posters	Probation range: 4 – 20 weeks 27 PACE (69%) Sanctions: Judicial Educator, papers, warnings, restitution, reprimands	Probation range: 3 – 34 weeks 25 PACE (71%) Sanctions: Judicial Educator, apology, warning, registration blocked, alcohol screening	Probation range: 4– 23 weeks 30 PACE (77%) Sanctions: reprimands, papers, warnings, Judicial Educator, restitution, in-hall move
2 nd time violations	13	8	13	8
Sanctions for 2 nd violations	Probation range: 7 – 35 weeks Sanctions: reprimands, papers, community service, Judicial Educator	Probation range: 3– 16 weeks Sanctions: Judicial Educator, community service, warning, paper	Probation range: 1 – 32 weeks Sanctions: Judicial Educator, papers	Probation range: 2 - 18 weeks Sanctions: PACE, paper, alcohol screening, restitution, Judicial Educator
3 rd time violations	3	3	1 (1 4 th violation)	3
Sanctions for 3 rd violations	Probation range: 15 – 30 weeks Sanctions: LIVE/PACE registration blocked, alcohol screening, paper	Probation range: 12 – 14 weeks Sanctions: program, posters	Probation range: 22 wks (22 wks) Sanctions: alcohol screening, Judicial Educator, Protective Services will be called	Probation range: 7 – 22 weeks Sanctions: meetings with Prot. Svs personnel, alcohol screening, papers

The Student Rights and Responsibilities Office did not use a database or other computerized method for tracking violations. As such, the process of identifying cases for the review was cumbersome, requiring a file-by-file review. Also, the table previously presented was data-mined by hand.

Most cases were adjudicated relatively quickly. However, due to the length of some cases, the average days appear to be longer. There is concern about the cases that took more than 30 days to adjudicate. Longer processes may have had other parties involved (Protective Services,

St. Pt. Police) but it is unclear why a case would take 85 days. Such processes should be streamlined to assist students in resolving their case expediently.

There appears to be little consistency or intentionality in sanctioning. Moreover, select sanctions appear to be ubiquitous—Judicial Educator as a sanction is employed in first, second and third offenses. There are no apparent guidelines (no minimums) for sanctions. The alcohol education (LIVE/PACE) class is encouraged for first time violations, yet, at best, during one semester only 77% of 1st time violators were sanctioned to attend. Further, a 3rd time violator was sanctioned to attend. While there is room for improvement in referrals to PACE, it is unlikely that 100% of first-time violators should be referred. A warning or caution system would be beneficial for first-time violators who are found not responsible for and AOD violation.

Probation periods appear to be highly subjective with the greatest disparity among the second and third violations. There appears to be no elevation of severity when a second violation or a third violation is achieved. In this sample, a case file with a 4th violation was drawn for review and the sanction was identical to a third violation. Committee members inquired as to the meaning of probation and how such is explained to the student.

There appear to be few firm protocols established for the institution as a whole. Minimum standards are not attended to and this includes conduct sanctioning. Ideally, as the institution adopts minimums and sets standards, this will enhance the quality of sanctions for students thereby helping students control their behavior more effectively.

Recommendations

Recommendations for programs

1. Establish a campus programming model grounded in science-based, research driven findings. In the spring of 2004, *A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges* was released by the NIAAA-supported Task Force on College Drinking. This task force advanced a *3-in-1 Framework* to encourage campus personnel, parents, community members and students to think more comprehensively about college drinking. Research in effective programming strongly supports a comprehensive programming framework which includes the following three domains. The first domain includes student drinkers themselves, especially those who are at risk or alcohol-dependent. The second domain includes the student population as a whole while the third domain includes the campus and the surrounding community. The intent of the *3-in-1 Framework* is to focus programming efforts on all three domains concurrently. Historically, programming has been aimed at the high-risk individuals in isolation with no attention paid to surrounding environment.

In addition to addressing the need for comprehensive programming, the NIAAA report also recommends specific programming interventions based upon current research in the alcohol and other drug field. Programs that have shown effectiveness with college students include those which 1) offer opportunities for students to develop cognitive-behavioral skills, 2) challenge students misperceptions about acceptability of abusive drinking, and 3) use motivational enhancement to unlock a student's intrinsic desire to change their drinking behaviors.

Other research projects advance an environmental model for challenging and changing student's drinking and drug use. The Higher Education Center along with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation have advanced and tested a model which emphasizes five factors: policy development and enforcement, normative environment, marketing and publicity of AOD,

limiting access to AOD, and alcohol-free options. Research suggests that the more closely institutions adhere to an environmental model the more likely they are to be successful.

2. Adopt a campus-community coalition as recommended in the UW system strategic plan. This coalition should have the responsibility for following up on the biennial review recommendations, fostering and maintaining a mutually supportive relationship with the community, and bringing AODA issues to the myriad groups across the UWSP campus. The first goal of the UW system strategic plan reads as follows:

Goal 1: Engage the greater university community in addressing AODA issues.

Objectives:

- The Office of the Chancellor assumes leadership of a campus AODA coalition that includes representation from all campus governance groups and constituencies
- The AODA coalition solicits city and county involvement
- The AODA coalition promotes the visibility of AODA issues and initiatives

3. Develop a strategy to educate faculty and staff. There was brief discussion about faculty and staff members and issues of education. One team member suggested that faculty and staff have very little knowledge of alcohol problems and issues on the campus. There has been discussion among several departments about an incident involving alcohol served at a faculty members' home. Additional discussion surrounded academic class meetings being held at local taverns. While there may not be university policy violations involved, several team members suggested that faculty and staff may benefit from some intentional educational outreach to help them become more aware of alcohol issues on campus and the role that they can play in helping students reduce their risk.

Recommendations for policy and enforcement:

1. Establish an effective system for annual distribution of policy (and program) information that would include both students and employees. The current distribution of policy and program information is inadequate. Notification of health risks and treatment options are also lacking. Distribution of this information is identified as critical to meeting the basic expectations of an AOD prevention program. Related to this comprehensive system was a suggestion to develop a "reader-friendly" document to aid students and employees in learning about AOD programs, services and policies.

2. Establish effective sanctioning guidelines. Currently, consequences for AODA violations are perceived to be insignificant and not enough to hold students truly accountable. Also, students have a right to know what consequences they will face should they choose to violate a campus policy. Research suggests that students are in a constant process of navigation, weighing pros and cons of their options. In addition, research on brain development suggests that students have difficulty thinking critically about risk and need as much guidance as possible. It would be of benefit to both adjudicating officers and students to provide a sanctioning guide that suggests more significant sanctions with each violation. Sanctions should also be developed and imposed for faculty and staff violations of campus AOD policy. Employing a three-strikes sanctioning system, similar to those on many campuses, might be a first reaction, but such action is an over-simplified response and not a long-term solution to student discipline. However, in the current

system, judicial officers have significant discretion which contributes to violators not being held equally accountable.

3. Develop a strategy to hold off-campus students accountable. Off-campus students contribute significantly to the delinquency of on-campus students by hosting illegal taverns (house parties). Such illegal taverns are a major concern in the community due to the noise, litter, and vandalism that occur as a result of heavy drinking. In the current structure, students who violate AOD ordinances in the city are not held accountable as students.

Appendix

- Review Team List (Chris Sadler, Becca Franzen, John Taylor, Pat Bloom, Adam Stein, Craig Peterson, Anne Hoffmann)
- Policy Documents
- Biennial Review Report for 2002-2003
- PACE program booklet
- Policy violation and sanction grids
- UW System Student Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Survey report from a Spring 2005 administration
- *A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges* released by the NIAAA-supported Task Force on College Drinking.
- UW System Strategic Plan for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Prevention Initiatives developed and distributed by the UW System AODA committee in May 2002.
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