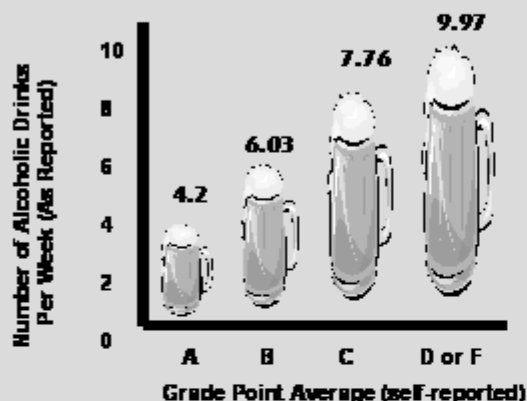


High-Risk Drinking & Academic Performance

Findings from the CORE survey (a national survey of 94,000 students from 197 colleges and universities conducted over three years) demonstrate a strong correlation between how much college students report drinking and their reported GPA's.



Other findings also demonstrate the impact of high-risk drinking on academic performance:

The national CORE survey of two- and four-year U.S. colleges found the following:

- 22.6% of students reported performing poorly on a test or assignment in the past 12 months as a result of alcohol use
- 32.8% had missed a class in the past 12 months due to alcohol use
- 70% of students reported having their studying or sleep interrupted as a result of another person's alcohol use.

The Harvard College Alcohol Study (N=14,000) examined "binge drinking" (which they defined as five or more drinks on one occasion for men and four or more for women):

- Students who had binged 3 or more times in the previous two weeks were 6 times more likely to have missed a class than their "non-binge drinking" peers [63% vs. 10%]
- Students who had binged 3 or more times in the previous two weeks were more than 4 times as likely to report falling behind academically than their "non-binge drinking" peers [46% vs. 9%].

RESOURCES

There are a variety of resources to support you in learning more about this issue:

Higher Education Alcohol Prevention Partnership

A partnership between the Office of Substance Abuse and Maine's colleges and universities

<http://www.maineosa.org/prevention/highered>

Maine Office of Substance Abuse's Information and Resource Center

<http://www.maineosa.org/irc>

Or call 1-800-499-0027
TTY: 1-800-215-7604

Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention

<http://www.edc.org/hec>

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse And Alcoholism (NIAAA)- College Drinking Task Force

<http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov>

This document was printed with funds from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws Program.

High-Risk Drinking & Academic Performance



Tips to Help Prevent High-Risk Drinking from Interfering With Your Students' Academic Performance

A Project of Maine's

Higher Education Alcohol Prevention Partnership

A Partnership between the Office of Substance Abuse (BDS) and Maine's Colleges and Universities to Reduce High-Risk Drinking and Related Problems.

High-Risk Drinking & Your Students

What Is High-Risk Drinking?

- Drinking before age 21 – in addition to being illegal, research shows even moderate alcohol use can interfere with learning and brain development into the early 20's
- Drinking in a situation or in conjunction with activities where the use of alcohol is dangerous and/or interferes with decision making
- Drinking when health conditions or medications make use more risky
- Consuming alcohol quickly with the goal of getting intoxicated (such as chugging and drinking games or contests)
- Consuming 5 or more drinks per occasion for males and 4 or more for females (sometimes called "binge drinking")

Moderate drinking by people of legal age is defined by USDA nutritional guidelines as no more than 2 standard drinks per day for males and 1 drink per day for women.

Why the Concern?

High-risk drinking is NOT a harmless part of the college experience. It is a major factor in all of the following problems students are at risk for:

- Missing Class
- Poor Grades
- Dropping-out
- Assaults
- Unsafe Sex
- Sexual Abuse
- Injury/Accidents
- Impaired Driving
- Legal Problems
- Health Problems
- Suicide Attempts
- Death

High-risk drinking is not a 'normal' part of college.

On national surveys the majority of students consistently report that they consume four or fewer drinks per occasion or do not drink at all. Most students overestimate how much their peers actually drink. This may make them feel pressured to drink more or even to believe that their high-risk drinking behaviors are acceptable or normal.

Take A Stand. Make A Difference.

Incorporate alcohol and other drug issues and prevention into your courses and assignments.

Whether it be through reading assignments, projects, safety procedures or current events, take advantage of opportunities to integrate substance abuse topics into your curriculum. Alcohol use is part of our society; using teachable moments from campus or current events is one way to create dialogue about it. Discussions centered around how high-risk alcohol use negatively impacts personal, occupational, and community wellness can help students to find balance and to make healthy choices.

Stress academics as students' number one priority in college and discuss how high-risk use of alcohol can interfere with their performance.

National research clearly demonstrates a link between high-risk drinking and lower grades, and even an increased likelihood of dropping out. Heavy drinking can interfere with one's ability to learn and retain information for up to 30 days. Help students to set realistic goals for course work and identify the actions necessary to achieve their goals.

Encourage your students to take an active role in creating a safe and supportive campus.

Remind your students that they have the right to an environment that supports their academic and life goals. Other students' drinking has the potential to interrupt their studies, sleep, safety, and fun. Educate students about resources and opportunities they have to address the problematic behavior of others and to create a better campus environment.

Use course schedules, attendance policies, and assignments to communicate that you expect learning to be their first priority.

Encourage the administration to schedule more courses in the mornings (especially on Fridays). Consider instituting an attendance policy for your courses and educate students about the relationship between attendance and academic performance. Plan for quizzes, exams, and other due dates to occur on Fridays. Scheduling your assignments around student drinking patterns may send the message that their behavior is acceptable.

Support, promote, and/or become involved in campus prevention efforts.

Faculty and staff are key to keeping students informed about campus programs and resources available to them. Supporting or becoming involved in efforts to create a safer environment can lead to better academic performance by students. If you have concerns about substance abuse in the college community discuss them with the Dean of Students or other administrator in a position to address the problem.

Monitor your personal language and examples.

Watch for things you say which may make high-risk drinking seem more common or more widely accepted than it really is. Remember that national data indicates that students think their peers drink far more than they actually do. Attempts to entertain or impress students with stories or jokes about alcohol use can make it seem more normal and less troublesome than it is.

**We invest a great deal into helping students attain a quality higher education—
let's all do our part to keep high-risk alcohol use from interfering with students' success!**