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# Final Report of the Alcohol Task Force

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Stonehill College

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April 2011

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*This report is dedicated to  
Dr. Neal Price, Director of the Counseling and Testing Center from 1993-2009,  
who had a passion about this issue and was often the leading voice  
in a call to change the alcohol culture at Stonehill.*

## Introduction

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Similar to many colleges and universities across the country, Stonehill has been faced with issues surrounding alcohol use and abuse on our campus. In many instances, this behavior has negatively impacted not only individual students, but the campus community as a whole.

As stated in Strategic Objective 1D in the 2011-2015 strategic plan, *Above and Beyond: The Plan for Stonehill College*, the College made a firm commitment to address the campus' alcohol culture with "the creation of a cross-divisional task force, with student representation, charged with studying, defining and reaching conclusions concerning the College's views on the use of alcohol and its impact on campus."

To that end, in January 2010, President Cregan formed the Alcohol Task Force and charged the group with:

- identifying and analyzing the environmental, community, and cultural issues at Stonehill which effect student alcohol consumption;
- assessing our approach to abuse prevention programs on campus and making recommendations for future education;
- developing and implementing a plan of action, including measurable outcomes, which allows for cultural change at the individual student level, the student body level, and the College community level; and
- conducting an assessment on the effectiveness of the plan, and based upon the determined measurable outcomes, making future recommendations for implementation.

What follows in this report is a summary of the work and findings of the Alcohol Task Force, including the final recommendations for implementation.

# Alcohol Culture at Stonehill College

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For decades, Stonehill has gathered data relative to drinking levels on campus. The results have shown to be consistent over time, with only slight variances in percentages from year to year. The information provided in this section reflects the most current survey data, which is in line with data trends from previous years.

This information was gleaned from multiple sources: Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey (2008), Core Survey (2009), Health and Behavior Assessment (2009), and Your First College Year Survey (2009). From these sources, a common story emerges about the perception and reality of alcohol use at Stonehill.

While some members of our community may believe alcohol use and binge drinking<sup>1</sup>, or high-risk drinking, among Stonehill students are in line with national averages, our levels are in fact higher compared to peer institutions and by national standards.

## *Student Perception of Alcohol Culture*

- According to the Health and Behavior Assessment (2009), when asked if they were concerned about their own alcohol use, most Stonehill students replied, “No” (97%). They also did not believe that alcohol use diminishes their academic performance (89%) or negatively impacts their health (76%). When asked if they would like to cut down on their alcohol use, the majority of Stonehill students responded in the negative (85%).
- According to the Core Survey (2009), most students think that alcohol use at Stonehill is less than or about the same as other colleges (90%). A relatively small number of students (10%) think that alcohol use at Stonehill is greater compared to other colleges.

## *Reality of the Alcohol Culture*

- The Core Survey (2009) reveals that 25% of students reported missing a class during the past year due to drinking or drug use, while 19% reported poor test or homework performance. During the past year, 77% of students reported having a hangover, and 19% admitted to driving under the influence. Essentially half of Stonehill students had a memory loss (49%) and/or did something they regretted (51%) while under the influence. While intoxicated, 12% have reported being taken advantage of sexually.
- According to the Core Survey (2009), 65% of all Stonehill students surveyed reported engaging in high-risk drinking or binge drinking in the past two weeks, compared to a national average of 47%.
- On average, the majority of first-year students at Stonehill spend 3-10 hours each week “partying,” which is about the same number of hours they spend studying, according to the CIRP Freshman Survey (2008) and Your First College Year Survey (2009).

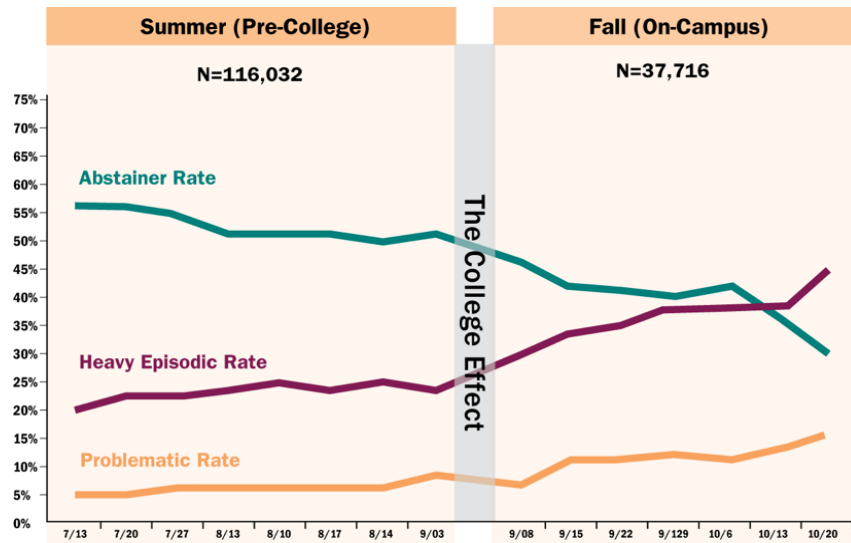
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<sup>1</sup> Binge drinking or high-risk drinking is when men consume more than five drinks or women consume more than four drinks within a two-hour period.

In terms of other student problems resulting from high-risk drinking, each year the College transports to the hospital a number of students who placed their personal health and safety at risk due to their high level of alcohol consumption. Last year alone, the College transported 51 students and evaluated an additional 48 who were not transported. This current academic year, it appears from our transport numbers that we will exceed last year's totals.

*The College Effect*

It is well known that the frequency of high-risk drinking or binge drinking increases during the first few weeks of college as students experience the freedom of living away from home for the first time. This is often referred to as the “college effect.”



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Through survey data, it has been determined that Stonehill students demonstrate this phenomenon all too clearly.

- Stonehill students enter the College binge drinking at a rate of 34%, which is 59% higher than the national rate of 20% (CIRP Freshman Survey 2008).
- The percentage of first-year students who binge drank increased from 34% to 54% during the first year of college, according to the CIRP Freshman Survey (2008) and Your First College Year Survey (2009).

Thus, overall, our data shows that Stonehill students, both prior to their arrival on campus and while they are enrolled here at the College, binge drink at significantly higher rates than the national average.

## Process

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In the years since 1968, task forces/ad hoc committees have been formed each decade to address the issue of high-risk drinking at Stonehill (see Historical Timeline within Appendices). Comprehensive sets of recommendations were developed and implemented, yet the pattern of high-risk drinking has persisted over time. With this in mind, the Alcohol Task Force (ATF) recognized the importance of focusing on developing strategies for implementation that would be sustainable over time and the need to fully integrate this issue within the long-term strategic planning efforts of the College. In addition, the ATF understood the importance of gaining institutional support regarding our efforts and maximizing cross-divisional collaboration and involvement.

During the first few months of our work, the ATF focused on gathering data that would serve as a common baseline of information from which to begin our work. To assist us in establishing this foundation of information, the following individuals were invited to present:

- Kirby Salerno, Senior Director of Partner Development, Outside the Classroom
  - *“State of the Union” Presentation*
- Pauline Dobrowski & Todd Gernes, Stonehill College
  - *“Perception vs. Reality” Presentation*
- Stephanie Patton, MPH, CHES – Southeast Center for Health Communities
  - *Best Practices in College Alcohol Abuse Prevention*
- Beth Devonshire, Stonehill College
  - *Stonehill Data Regarding Alcohol Related Incidents*

In addition, the ATF reviewed information presented from the following presentations at the December 2009 Quarterly Management Meeting:

- Brandon H. Busted, CEO and Founder, Outside the Classroom
  - *State of the Union: Alcohol Prevention in Higher Ed and the Stonehill College Context*
- Dr. Neal Price, Stonehill College
  - *Welcome to Your Village*

It should also be noted that the Community Standards Review Committee, charged with completing a comprehensive review of the Community Standards and Student Discipline System and recommending changes, joined the Alcohol Task Force for the majority of the above presentations. This was intentionally done to maximize information sharing, as best practices encourage the development, publication, and consistent enforcement of campus policies related to alcohol.

Once all group members had a comprehensive understanding of the national and local landscape regarding the issue of high-risk drinking, as well as documented best practices for the prevention of alcohol abuse, the ATF divided into five working groups who were responsible for developing strategies for implementation relative to their topics. The five working groups established were:

- Education and Prevention
- Messaging and Marketing
- Academic Partnerships
- Programming

- Community Relations

For five months, the working groups met to discuss their ideas and reached out to additional constituencies, both within and outside the College, for their input and expertise in developing strategies for implementation. On a number of occasions, the working groups presented their draft recommendations to the entire ATF for feedback and ultimately finalized and submitted their work to the larger group.

As the ATF felt it imperative to engage the larger Stonehill community in conversations about the current alcohol culture on campus and the work of our group, we were intentional in providing regular communication and outreach to the community. Specifically, the following efforts were completed:

- Presentations at Quarterly Management Meetings – December 2009 & March 2010
- Presentations at Student Government Association Senate Meetings – December 2009, April 2010 and March 2011
- Presentations/updates at Student Affairs Committee – spring 2010 and fall 2011 semesters
- Presentations/updates at the Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees – June 2010, September 2010, and January 2011
- Student Affairs Divisional Meeting updates – monthly starting in December 2009
- Institutional Assessment Committee presentation – March 2010
- Faculty workshop offered by the Counseling and Testing Center – April 2010
- Article in *The Summit* – October 2010
- Faculty Mailing – December 2010
- Communications via the Monday Morning Update – monthly during the fall 2010 semester
- Open Student Discussions – December 2010
- Presentation to Residence Life Staff – January 2011
- Alumni Magazine Article – spring 2011

# Best Practices in College Alcohol Abuse Prevention

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## NIAAA Call to Action

In 2002, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) released a report titled *A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges*. This report was developed by a task force comprised of college presidents, alcohol researchers, and students who assessed the current trends in alcohol use in higher education and analyzed the resources currently combating alcohol abuse on college and university campuses.

This report focused on three main issues:

1. The scope of the problem
2. The effectiveness of programs used by schools and communities
3. A summary of recommendations designed to improve prevention efforts

## “3-in-1 Framework”

In the past, campuses have focused much of their prevention efforts on only three specific areas of strategic intervention: (1) changing people’s knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral intentions regarding substance use (e.g. awareness programs, peer education); (2) protecting students from short-term consequences (e.g. safe ride or designated driver programs), and (3) intervening with and treating students with substance use problems (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990). This work, while critical, “does little to change the campus and community environment in which students make decisions about substance use, thus leaving intact the conditions that drive the problem and virtually ensuring that it continues” (U.S. Department of Education, 2007).

To change the culture of drinking on campus, the NIAAA recommends that all colleges and universities adopt a “3-in-1 Framework”, an integrated program with multiple complementary components that target: (1) the individual student, including at-risk or alcohol-dependent drinkers, (2) the student body as a whole, and (3) the college and the surrounding community. Thus, this framework is designed to encourage consideration of multiple audiences, both on and off campus. The NIAAA suggests that this work is best implemented in a comprehensive, coordinated fashion, working with a broad base of support from within the campus and the community.

### *Individuals, “At-Risk”, or Alcohol-Dependent Drinkers*

Targeting only students with identified drinking problems misses those who drink heavily or misuse alcohol on occasion. To target the individual at-risk drinker, the report suggests screening individual students to assess their drinking habits and discussing with them how they compare with those of other students. Other interventions include offering screening and intervention services, such as brief motivational interviews during emergency room and health center visits.

### *The Student Body as a Whole*

To best affect the behavior of the general student body, the report recommends addressing several factors within the environment that support high-risk drinking. The NIAAA suggests the following environmental contributors to the overall problem:



- Widespread availability of alcohol to students
- Aggressive marketing and promotion of alcohol
- Excessive unstructured free time for students
- Inconsistent publicizing and enforcement of laws and policies
- Student perceptions that high-risk drinking is the norm

### *College and Surrounding Community*

To address the college and surrounding community environment, the NIAAA recommends collaborative prevention efforts between the campus and the community. The report suggests that these two groups are more likely to work in partnership when college student drinking is recognized as a problem affecting not only the campus, but also the larger community.

The NIAAA also cited critical need for presidential commitment and support to implement prevention programs relevant to the campus and community and the importance of student participation in developing sound and effective prevention policies.

### Four Tiers of Prevention

Evidence supporting the effectiveness of alcohol abuse prevention strategies varies widely and is many times inconsistent. Some strategies have not been as thoroughly studied as others; other strategies have not been evaluated in college/university environments or for application to college drinkers. The NIAAA reviewed potentially useful preventive interventions and placed them into four “tiers” according to their effectiveness as determined by the results of available research-based studies.

#### *Tier 1: Effective Among College Students*

- Combine cognitive-behavioral skills with norms clarification and motivation enhancement interventions. *Cognitive-behavioral skills training* works to alter a student’s incorrect beliefs and thinking about the use of alcohol through various activities. *Norms or values clarification* analyzes students’ perceptions about the acceptability of high-risk drinking and uses data to discount these beliefs. Lastly, *motivational enhancement* works to enhance students’ intrinsic desire to change behavior.
- Offer brief motivational enhancement interventions in student health centers and emergency rooms<sup>2</sup>
- Challenge alcohol expectancies so that students understand that drinking does not necessarily produce many of the positive effects they may be seeking, such as sociability and sexual attractiveness

#### *Tier 2: Effective with General Population*

- Increase enforcement of minimum drinking age laws
- Effectively implement and increase publicity and enforcement of other laws to reduce alcohol impaired driving
- Restrictions on alcohol retail density
- Increased price and excise taxes on alcohol beverages
- Responsible beverage service policies in social and commercial settings

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<sup>2</sup> In November 2007, the NIAAA issued an update to *A Call to Action* entitled *What Colleges Need to Know Now: An Update on College Drinking Research*. This report provided additional support for the use of brief motivational interventions (BMI) in arenas that students frequent (health centers, etc.), the use of BMI for policy violators, and using trained student peers to help implement these interventions.

- Form a campus-community coalition<sup>3</sup>

#### *Tier 3: Promising Strategies*

- Adopt campus-based policies to reduce high-risk use
- Increase enforcement at campus-based events that promote high-risk drinking
- Increase publicity about enforcement of underage drinking laws and eliminate mixed messages
- Consistently enforce campus disciplinary actions associated with policy violations
- Conduct marketing campaign to correct student misperceptions about alcohol use on campus
- Provide “safe ride” programs
- Regulate happy hours and sales
- Enhance awareness of personal liability
- Inform new students and parents about alcohol policies and penalties

#### *Tier 4: Ineffective or Lacking Evidence*

- Informational, knowledge-based, or values clarification interventions when used alone

### Environmental Management

While acknowledging a role for individual education and intervention efforts, *A Call to Action* focuses on the importance of a comprehensive environmental management approach to college alcohol abuse prevention. DeJong (2009) identifies four areas to consider as part of this comprehensive environmental approach:

1. Changing people’s knowledge, attitudes, skills, self-efficacy, and behavioral intentions regarding reduced alcohol use
2. Eliminating or modifying environmental factors that contribute to the problem (*i.e.* environmental change). Substance use problems are driven by environmental factors that increase the availability and appeal of alcohol and other drugs, each of which can be addressed with environmental management strategies:
  - a. *Provide Alcohol-Free Options.* Many students have a great deal of unstructured free time, and too few social and recreational options that they can access at the spur of the moment.  
*The strategic objective:* offer and promote social, recreational, extracurricular, and public service options that do not include alcohol or other drugs.
  - b. *Create a Normative Environment.* Many people accept drinking and other drug use as a “normal” part of the college experience.  
*The strategic objective:* create a social, academic, and residential environment that supports health-promoting norms.
  - c. *Restrict Alcohol Availability.* Alcohol is abundantly available to students and is inexpensive.  
*The strategic objective:* limit alcohol availability both on and off campus.
  - d. *Restrict Alcohol Marketing and Promotion.* Local bars, restaurants, and liquor stores use aggressive promotions to target underage and other college drinkers.

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<sup>3</sup> The update also emphasized the importance of collaboration between the campus and its surrounding communities and the integration of multiple prevention strategies.

*The strategic objective:* restrict marketing and promotion of alcoholic beverages both on and off campus.

- e. *Strengthen Policy Development and Enforcement.* Campus policies and local, state, and federal laws are not enforced consistently.

*The strategic objective:* develop and enforce campus policies and enforce local, state, and federal laws.

3. Protecting students from the short-term negative consequences of alcohol consumption (“health protection”), such as injury or illness.
4. Intervening with and treating students who are addicted to alcohol or otherwise show evidence of problem drinking

# Recommendations for Implementation by Working Group

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What follows is a comprehensive set of recommendations from the five working groups. Outlined in each working group's set of recommendations is the desired outcome and strategies for implementation, including responsible parties, performance measurements, and, where needed, additional ongoing resources required.

## Prevention and Education

**Desired Outcome:** Establish and implement a sustainable college-wide alcohol education and prevention program, with ongoing assessment, targeted at reducing the high-risk drinking levels and subsequent harms on campus.

- Strategy for implementation: Purchase a research-proven online alcohol education program, such as Alcohol-Wise or AlcoholEdu, and administer to first-year students prior to the start of classes in order to educate them about alcohol, its negative consequences, safe decision making, and helping friends in need.
  - Responsible parties: Health and Wellness Coordinator, Director of Counseling and Testing, and Director of Community Standards
  - Performance measurement: Completed program by 90+% first-year students
  - Additional resources needed: Annual costs associated with purchase of program Alcohol-Wise = \$4,620 (660 students at \$7/student); AlcoholEdu = \$12K-\$14K
  
- Strategy for implementation: Create a social norms marketing campaign using data from the online educational program (see above strategy) that targets first-year students during the first six weeks of classes.
  - Responsible parties: Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Committee (see Conclusion and Next Steps section), and InHouse Design
  - Performance measurement: Implemented social norms marketing campaign
  - Additional resources needed: \$2,500 for printing costs
  
- Strategy for implementation: Develop and implement a comprehensive training program on alcohol education and prevention, as well as bystander intervention, for student leaders (*e.g.*, Resident Assistants, ALANA Brothers and Sisters, Peer Mentors, Crossings Ministers, SGA officers, Athletic Leadership Academy participants).
  - Responsible party: AOD Committee
  - Performance measurement: Completed training for at least 80% of the identified student leaders
  - Additional resources needed: \$2,500 for food, training materials, and presenter stipends
  
- Strategy for implementation: Bring together campus constituencies to create a risk reduction campaign, using evidence based strategies, that promotes alcohol awareness, education, and prevention the week(s) leading up to high-risk events (*e.g.*, large scale dances, Spring Weekend and senior countdowns) to reduce binge drinking and pre-gaming.
  - Responsible party: AOD Committee
  - Performance measurement: Implemented risk reduction campaign

- Additional resources needed: \$2,500 for printing and publicity costs
- Strategy for implementation: Provide alcohol education, prevention and risk reduction training for faculty advisors of first-year students.
  - Responsible parties: The AOD Committee and the First-Year Experience Committee
  - Performance measurement: Completed training for at least 80% of faculty advisors of first-year students
- Strategy for implementation: Hire an AOD Coordinator to develop and implement a comprehensive alcohol education prevention program. The AOD Coordinator would be responsible for developing a budget to ensure that financial resources allocated to the educational solution are commensurate with the problem the College has identified. In addition, the AOD Coordinator will investigate how the Social Ecological Model<sup>4</sup> of institutional change can inform the College's approach to the alcohol problem, and conduct ongoing research of best practices that could support the College's efforts to design and implement a comprehensive alcohol education prevention strategy.
  - Responsible party: Vice President for Student Affairs
  - Performance measurement: AOD Coordinator hired
  - Additional resources needed: Salary for AOD Coordinator to be determined by Human Resources based upon market comparisons
- Strategy for implementation: Coordinate and implement training for a select group of faculty and administrators on the Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students (BASICS) Program, a preventive intervention program that aims to reduce drinking and enhance awareness about alcohol-related issues.
  - Responsible parties: Health and Wellness Educator and AOD Coordinator
  - Performance measurement: Implementation of BASICS program
  - Additional resources needed: \$5,000 for BASICS training and implementation
- Strategy for implementation: Conduct ongoing alcohol assessments and education and gather data on key indicators that measure the College's progress on reducing high-risk drinking on campus, assess the data in a collective and comparative fashion, and communicate the results to appropriate individuals, offices, and committees. Examples of survey instruments to be used include AlcoholEdu/Alcohol-Wise, CORE, National College Health Assessment (NCHA), Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), Your First College Year (YFCY), etc.
  - Responsible parties: AOD Committee and Director of Planning and Institutional Research
  - Performance measurement: Completed annual assessment and distribution of report findings to key individuals (President, Division Heads, SGA Executive Board and First-Year Experience Committee)
- Strategy for implementation: Host an Alcohol Summit at Stonehill, inviting area colleges and universities to attend with the goal of educating on current trends, programs and successes in alcohol initiatives on college campuses. This Summit would include a keynote speaker and educational breakout sessions. Student leaders would be highly encouraged to attend.

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<sup>4</sup> The Social Ecological Model is an integrative framework that includes individual, relational, community, and societal aspects, with each aspect given equal weight.

- Responsible party: AOD Committee
- Performance measurement: Completed Alcohol Summit
- Additional resources needed: \$3,000 for speaker stipends, materials and refreshments. Costs will be subsidized by a modest registration fee for participants.

## Messaging and Marketing

**Desired Outcome:** Develop a messaging and marketing plan that will educate the internal and external Stonehill constituencies about responsible drinking and the adverse effects of alcohol use and abuse.

- Strategy for implementation: Communicate each semester, via the Monday Morning Update, facts/statistics and debunked myths based on national and Stonehill student survey data regarding alcohol use and abuse.
  - Responsible party: Director of Communications and Media Relations
  - Performance measurement: Published information each semester
- Strategy for implementation: Sustain dialogue with the alumni through communication via the *Stonehill Alumni Magazine* and Alumni Council on updates related to campus life and the work of the Alcohol Task Force in addressing the current drinking climate on campus.
  - Responsible parties: Director of Alumni Affairs, AOD Committee Co-Chairs, and Director of Communications and Media Relations
  - Performance measurement: Article in the Stonehill Alumni Magazine and presentation(s) to the Alumni Council
- Strategy for implementation: Develop and implement a concise/consistent marketing message (tag-line) associated with responsible drinking.
  - Responsible parties: Director of Marketing, AOD Coordinator, and InHouse Design
  - Performance measurement: Completed and published marketing message
- Strategy for implementation: Promote/provide alcohol education for current students through the use of printed marketing/public service announcements (*e.g.*, table tents, posters, door hangers, bathroom mirror stickers, Channel 70, WSHL, and *The Summit* ads, etc.) in conjunction with the developed tag-line.
  - Responsible parties: AOD Coordinator, Dean of Academic Achievement, Director of Communications and Media Relations, Director of Marketing, and InHouse Design
  - Additional resources needed: Printing costs
- Strategy for implementation: Create and disseminate an annual letter signed by the President tailored to the parents of students in each class year addressing alcohol use and the expectations of the College.
  - Responsible parties: President, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Director of Communications and Media Relations
  - Resources: Budgeted funds for stationery and postage expenses
  - Performance measurement: Completed annual mailing
- Strategy for implementation: Offer sessions on alcohol-related topics to both parents and students at New Student Orientation.

- Responsible parties: Director of Student Activities, AOD Coordinator, and Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students
- Performance measurement: Completed sessions
- Strategy for implementation: Develop print material (*e.g.*, website, admissions material) for prospective students and their families regarding how the College addresses the alcohol culture within college life.
  - Responsible parties: Dean of Admissions, Director of Marketing, AOD Coordinator, and Director of Communications and Media Relations
  - Performance measurement: Completed print material
  - Additional resources needed: Printing costs
- Strategy for implementation: Develop a consistent answer/message that Student Ambassadors, Admissions Counselors, and Admissions Area Representatives can provide in response to inquiries from prospective students and their families regarding how the College addresses the alcohol culture within college life.
  - Responsible parties: Dean of Admissions and Director of Marketing
  - Performance measurement: Completed answer/message
- Strategy for implementation: Develop and distribute a two-sided fact sheet for Stonehill faculty, staff and administrators that contains national and Stonehill-specific data on student alcohol use and its impact on academic performance.
  - Responsible parties: AOD Coordinator, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students, and Director of Communications and Media Relations
  - Performance measurement: Completed fact sheet
- Strategy for implementation: Develop and provide a presentation to new employees on the work of the AOD Committee as well as the alcohol culture at Stonehill and current efforts to reduce high-risk drinking on campus.
  - Responsible parties: Co-Chairs of the AOD Committee and Vice President for Mission
  - Performance measurement: Completed presentations

## Academic Partnerships

**Desired Outcome:** Strengthen the academic environment outside the classroom, heighten awareness of the impact of alcohol use on academic performance, increase academic requirements during known times of high alcohol-consumption, and broaden faculty and student interactions and conversations.

- Strategy for implementation: Shift focus of student academic endeavors more towards Friday and Saturday by exploring the possibility of moving Monday/Wednesday classes to Wednesday/Friday, increasing the number of assignments and exams due/held on Friday, and extending the library hours on the weekend.
  - Responsible parties: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs/Dean of the Faculty, Registrar, and Department Chairs
  - Performance measurement: Completed recommendations

- Strategy for implementation: Increase dialogue and collaboration between divisional leadership within Student Affairs and Academic Affairs regarding ways to best educate faculty and students about the current alcohol culture at Stonehill and work together to develop and implement strategies to address this issue. Strategies to be considered include presenting on the topic at New Faculty Orientation, inviting *Outside the Classroom* to address the faculty during Academic Development Day, incorporating an alcohol education program/speaker within the First-Year Experience Program, and creating a faculty website focused on alcohol (see Virginia Tech site as a model: <http://www.alcohol.vt.edu/Faculty/index.htm>).
  - Responsible parties: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Student Affairs
  - Performance measurement: Divisional meetings and completed educational programs for faculty and students
  - Additional resources needed: Speaker fee for *Outside the Classroom*
  
- Strategy for implementation: Increase faculty presence within the residence halls to best promote true living and learning environments and strengthen faculty and student relationships outside the traditional classroom. This can be accomplished through increasing the number of live-in options for faculty, expanding student/faculty programming within the residence halls (e.g., faculty dinners, open houses, Community Associate events, etc.), and enhancing the academic connection with Special Interest Housing groups.
  - Responsible parties: Director of Residence Life and Dean of Academic Achievement
  - Performance measurement: Additional faculty sponsored programs, live-in faculty, and faculty advisors to Special Interest Housing groups
  - Additional resources needed: Funds associated with possible conversion of current student living spaces (e.g., Bridge House and/or student rooms) to faculty housing.
  
- Strategy for implementation: Provide alcohol education, prevention and risk reduction training for faculty members who teach classes that involve travel and administrators who oversee travel programs, and develop and communicate student expectations around alcohol use while on College sponsored trips.
  - Responsible parties: The AOD Committee, Assistant Dean of General Education and Academic Achievement, and Director of International Programs
  - Performance measurement: Completed training for at least 80% of faculty members who teach classes that involve travel and administrators who oversee travel programs
  
- Strategy for implementation: Collaborate with professors teaching alcohol/addiction related courses, such as The Use and Abuse of Alcohol, to infuse Stonehill-specific data within the coursework.
  - Responsible parties: AOD Committee and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs/Dean of the Faculty
  - Performance measurement: Incorporation of Stonehill-specific data within courses

## Programming

**Desired Outcome:** Increase, effectively communicate, and appropriately fund late night programming on the weekends, specifically within the first six weeks of the academic year (*i.e.*, the College Effect period), through collaboration with various departments/divisions across campus.



- Strategy for implementation: Develop and publish a comprehensive calendar of events, occurring Thursday through Saturday, within the first six weeks of the academic year that includes both alcohol-free programs as well as events for legal-aged students that promote responsible drinking.
  - Responsible parties: Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students, Director of Student Activities, and Director of Residence Life
  - Performance measurement: Published comprehensive calendar of events
  - Additional resources needed: \$25,000/year within Student Activities budget for programming and staffing
  
- Strategy for implementation: Require that general student clubs and organizations [outside of the Student Government Association (SGA) Programming Committees] offer at least one alcohol-free late night and weekend programmatic offering (Thursday-Saturday, 10 p.m.-1 a.m.) in order to secure general funding for their clubs/organizations each semester.
  - Responsible parties: Director of Student Activities and SGA Executive President
  - Performance measurement: Published alcohol-free late night/weekend calendar of events
  
- Strategy for implementation: Promote and publish information regarding an additional funding source for alcohol-free late night and weekend programming (*e.g.*, Weekend Programming Pot-W.E.P.P.) and create an online mechanism whereby student groups can apply for this funding (see Bridgewater State University's Involvement Grant: <http://www.bridgew.edu/SIL/big.cfm>).
  - Responsible party: Director of Student Activities
  - Performance measurement: Promotional materials and completed online application
  - Additional resources needed: \$25,000/semester
  
- Strategy for implementation: Increase communication to students regarding programmatic offerings, both on and off campus. This should be accomplished through the development of a user-friendly events calendar, to be linked to the College's homepage and myHill, as well as continued weekly weekend update communication to students.
  - Responsible party: College's Calendar Committee
  - Performance measurement: Completed events calendar and weekly update communication
  - Additional resources needed: To be determined by committee
  
- Strategy for implementation: Work with the Department of Recreational Sports to explore the possibility of additional formal and informal programming/tournaments (*e.g.*, dodge ball, volleyball, etc.) to be held late night Thursdays through Saturdays.
  - Responsible parties: Director of Student Activities and Director of Recreational Sports
  - Performance measurement: Completed recommendations for additional programming
  - Additional resources needed: Possible grant opportunities
  
- Strategy for implementation: As indicated in the College's strategic plan, [Above and Beyond: The Plan for Stonehill College 2011-2015](#), form an interdivisional planning group charged with researching traditions at other colleges, assessing current Stonehill traditions for their positive contributions to both campus and the local community, and developing and instituting new events/traditions designed to bring together students, alumni, faculty, staff and/or neighbors in a positive and spirited way. Examples of such events include Homecoming, faculty brunch on

reading day, holiday celebrations, Brother Mike's events, trivia nights, and sporting competitions. These new traditions should either be alcohol-free or should create an atmosphere that encourages responsible drinking.

- Responsible parties: Vice President for Student Affairs and Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
  - Performance measurement: Formation of committee and implementation of new events/traditions
  - Additional resources needed: To be determined by committee
- Strategy for implementation: Collaborate with the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics to enhance co-sponsorship with SGA Programming Committees in an effort to increase attendance and fan participation at athletic events and provide additional alternative alcohol-free events on campus.
    - Responsible parties: Assistant Director of Student Activities for Programming and Assistant Director of Athletics
    - Performance measurement: Increased student attendance at athletic events
  - Strategy for implementation: Form a sub-committee of the AOD Committee (see Conclusion and Next Steps) to assess and make recommendations on the future of large scale events/weekends that result in an increased amount of alcohol related transports/incidents (*e.g.*, large scale dances and Spring Weekend).
    - Responsible parties: AOD Sub-Committee
    - Performance measurement: Completed set of recommendations

## Community Relations

**Desired Outcome:** Develop/enhance relationships with community partners that promote mutually beneficial working and living environments so as to increase communication and information sharing, decrease accessibility of alcohol to underage students, and minimize the negative impacts of alcohol use within both the Stonehill and local community.

- Strategy for implementation: Identify students living in off-campus housing and implement preventative efforts (*e.g.*, annual meeting, Guide to Being a Good Neighbor brochure, etc.) to maximize student safety and positive neighbor experiences, as well as minimize the number of complaints from neighbors/town officials regarding off-campus student behavior.
  - Responsible parties: Director of Community Standards and Registrar
  - Performance measurement: Compiled list (updated each semester) of students living in off campus housing, completed preventative initiatives, and reduced number of complaints of negative student behavior from neighbors/town officials
- Strategy for implementation: Host at least one meeting per year with key college administrators, SGA Executive Board members, and town officials to discuss potential collaborations/initiatives between the College and the town, as well as any off-campus student issues/concerns.
  - Responsible parties: Vice President for Student Affairs
  - Performance measurement: Completed meetings

- Strategy for implementation: Develop and implement a policy and subsequent procedures related to tailgating on campus.
  - Responsible parties: Vice President for Student Affairs, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students, Director of Alumni Affairs, Director of Athletics, Chief of Campus Police and Director of Facilities Management
  - Performance measurement: Completed policy/procedures
  
- Strategy for implementation: Increase and maintain regular communication with area businesses that accept the Hill Card to ensure proper use and advertising. In addition, hold in-person meetings with those businesses accepting the Hill Card that serve alcohol in an effort to best prevent the use of the Hill Card for alcohol-related purchases.
  - Responsible parties: Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students and Director of Purchasing
  - Performance measurement: Completed letter to area businesses and/or meetings with establishments serving alcohol
  
- Strategy for implementation: Perform annual outreach to local liquor stores frequently visited by Stonehill students to build connections and inform them of the College's policies.
  - Responsible parties: Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students and Chief of Campus Police
  - Performance measurement: Completed visits and creation of communication materials
  
- Strategy for implementation: Host annual meetings with key college administrators and local hospital administrators in an effort to maximize communication and information sharing.
  - Responsible party: Vice President for Student Affairs
  - Performance measurement: Completed meetings/meeting minutes
  
- Strategy for implementation: Develop target initiatives between campus and local law enforcement to limit access of alcohol to underage population.
  - Responsible party: Chief of Campus Police
  - Performance measurement: To be determined based upon specific grant criteria
  - Additional resources needed: State and/or federal government grant monies
  
- Strategy for implementation: Continue Stonehill participation within the South Shore Coalition<sup>5</sup> and identify and invite representatives from all higher education institutions within southeastern Massachusetts to participate.
  - Responsible parties: Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students and Director of Community Standards
  - Performance measurement: Identified representatives from area institutions and ongoing meetings

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<sup>5</sup> The South Shore Coalition is a group comprised of representatives from local area colleges that meets on a regular basis to discuss best practices relative to alcohol education and prevention on college campuses.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

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Following a review of best practices and available data, the Alcohol Task Force has developed a comprehensive set of recommendations to best support a holistic environmental approach to reduce high-risk drinking and the associated harms on our campus. We recognize that there are significant financial resources identified to implement these recommendations; however, we believe that this is a critical investment given our current alcohol culture. We also believe that ongoing institutional support and cross divisional involvement are paramount in order to effectively implement these recommendations and sustain change over time.

As next steps, the committee recommends the creation and appointment, by the President, of an Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Committee to oversee the implementation of the recommendations, assess the outcomes of these efforts, and make recommendations for the future. We recommend that this committee be co-chaired by a Student Affairs administrator, namely the Staff Social Worker/Coordinator - Alcohol and Other Drugs within the Counseling and Testing Center, along with an administrator from Academic Affairs. The committee should be cross-divisional and include student representation from each class year.

The ATF firmly believes that broad environmental change to address the current alcohol culture is both necessary and achievable and that this report provides the College with a comprehensive road map from which to begin our work.

## References

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Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey, Stonehill College, 2008.

Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Your First College Year Survey, Stonehill College, 2009.

Core Survey, Stonehill College, 2009.

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Health Behavior Needs Assessment, Stonehill College, 2008.

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U.S. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. *A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges*. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Bethesda, MD, 2002.

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# Appendices

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## Committee Representation

Pauline Dobrowski	Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students (Chair)
Craig Almeida	Dean of Academic Achievement
Trish Brown	Head Women's Basketball Coach
Jeany Cadet	Area Coordinator
Bobby Conceison	Assistant Director of Alumni Affairs, Class of 1998
Beth Devonshire	Director of Community Standards, Class of 1998
David Dugas	Major Gifts Officer
Nancy Dunsing	Executive Assistant, Provost's Office
Meghan Dwyer	Staff Social Worker/Coordinator of AOD Assessment
Todd Gernes	Director of General Education
Jessica Greene	Health & Wellness Educator
Walter Jenkins, C.S.C.	Director of Campus Ministry
Andrew Leahy	Senior Admissions Counselor, Class of 2005
Lina Macedo	Assistant Director of Student Activities
Jane Nash	Professor, Psychology
Mike O'Brien	Campus Police Officer
Michelle Rojas	Residence Director
Lindsay Bock	Class of 2012
Brendan Murray	Class of 2014
Emily Pothier	Class of 2013
Eric Scholl	Class of 2011
Chauncey Velasco	Class of 2012
Mark White	Class of 2011

## Survey Descriptions

### Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey (2008)

The CIRP Freshman Survey is administered to all incoming Stonehill students every three years. Students complete the survey during Fall Orientation, prior to the start of classes; therefore, it provides a snapshot of incoming students prior to their experiencing college. The survey covers a wide range of student characteristics, such as parental income and education, general demographics, secondary school achievement and activities, educational and career plans, values, attitudes, beliefs and self concept.

### Core Survey (2009)

The Core Survey is administered every three years in March to a representative sample of all four class years. The survey measures behaviors of actual alcohol and other drug use and consequences of use, and also provides the institution with students' attitudes, perceptions, and opinions about alcohol and drugs.

### Health and Behavior Assessment (2009)

The Health and Behavior Assessment was administered for the first time in October 2009 to a representative sample of all four class years. The tool is aimed at identifying and assessing key health behaviors of students in various areas, such as nutrition, physical activity, stress, and spiritual health. Results of the assessment are being used to create baseline data to track the prevalence of certain at-risk health behaviors, as well as to identify areas that may need more attention. Moving forward, the College plans to administer this survey on a three year cycle.

### Your First College Year Survey (2009)

The Your First College Year Survey is administered every three years in April to all first-year students. It is specifically designed to assess the academic and personal development of students over the first year of college. In addition, it allows institutions to identify features of the first year that encourage student learning, involvement, satisfaction, and retention and success.

## **Stonehill College Alcohol Policy Timeline, May 26, 2010**

Todd S. Gernes, Ph.D.

Assistant Dean of Academic Achievement and Director of General Education

**1933-1968:** Drinking age in Massachusetts 21 years of age.

**1968:** Ad Hoc Committee appointed to study questions about the Student Housing Regulations and the Use of Alcoholic Beverages on Campus, Rev. Paul J. Duff, CSC, Chairman. Recommendations:

- Seniors and juniors be personally responsible for observance of the Massachusetts State Alcohol Law. Disorderliness and intoxication on their part would be subject to disciplinary action.
- The use of alcoholic beverages is restricted to those Towne Houses occupied exclusively by seniors and juniors. Under no circumstances will liquor be permitted in the dormitories or in any other place on the Campus.
- Freshmen and sophomores are forbidden to possess or to consume alcoholic beverages on the College premises. Violation of this regulation is considered a serious offense punishable by suspension from the College.

**September-March, 1971:** Stonehill institutes a new drug policy and a “Drug Education Seminar,” led by Detective John Dibassio, Narcotics Division, Brockton Police Department.

**1973:** Drinking age in Massachusetts lowered from 21 to 18.

**January, 1977:** Task Force on Alcohol Use and Abuse convened and report published, Bob Marcantonio, Chairman. This is a data-driven, comprehensive plan incorporating legal, educational, and judicial aspects.

- Stonehill partners with the Alcoholism Intervention Center in Brockton to create a comprehensive education program as part of Stonehill’s disciplinary system.
- New focus on alcoholism and pathology.
- Counseling, educational, therapeutic language added to alcohol violation sanctions.
- In general, students believe their drinking is properly controlled (*i.e.* moderate). Although the great majority seems to drink in moderation, the data indirectly indicate that a sizeable minority (maybe 20%) is drinking heavily.

**October, 1977:** Task Force on Alcohol Use and Abuse becomes the Alcohol Information Committee.

**January, 1978:** Alcohol Committee gathering steam and promoting more comprehensive training, education, co-curricular activities, and social norming. A “multi-modality” approach is suggested by William Braun, echoing recommendations from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol Information.

**1979:** Drinking age in Massachusetts raised from 18 to 20.

**October 11, 1979:** Revised alcohol policy in response to change in Massachusetts law. Drinking in public areas of the campus is now forbidden. Parties in residence are must be registered with the Residence Director. “Confiscate” and “destroy” language added to policy—general tightening of language and tone.



**1979:** Students protest new restrictions on alcohol use with the following petition:

WE, OF LEGAL DRINKING STATUS, ARE IN OPPOSITION TO THE NEW STONEHILL COLLEGE ALCOHOL POLICY. BEING OF LEGAL AGE WE FEEL FIFTY GUESTS [in the Townhouse Lounges, 135 square feet or about 11' X 12'] IS A RIDICULOUS LIMITATION. SECONDLY, AS LONG AS SECURITY IS EMPLOYED THERE SHOULD BE NO NEED FOR SUCH STRONG GUIDELINES ON THE AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL AVAILABLE. FINALLY THE CURFEW OF 2:00 a.m., AS STATED IN THE ALCOHOL POLICY CREATED BY THE STUDENT AFFAIRS DIVISION, IS EXTREMELY UNREASONABLE. THE UNDERSIGNED FEEL THAT A REVISION IN THE ALCOHOLIC DRINKING POLICY IS NECESSARY FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF AN ADEQUATE SOCIAL LIFE.

**1979:** The Committee of the Class of 1983 sent out the following memo to fellow classmates in protest of the new alcohol policy.

LET IT BE KNOWN THAT THE COMMITTEE OF THE CLASS OF 1983 DOES NOT APPROVE, NOR WILL IT SUPPORT THE NEW ALCOHOL POLICY. FURTHERMORE, THE COMMITTEE WILL WORK AGAINST THE ADMINISTRATION WHENEVER THERE IS A CONFLICT INVOLVING THIS NEW POLICY, PARTICULARLY AS IT PERTAINS TO THE TOWNHOUSE COURTS.

LET IT ALSO BE KNOWN THAT THE COMMITTEE WILL NOT ALLOW THE ADMINISTRATION TO TAKE AWAY RESIDENCY FROM ANYONE CAUGHT WITH A BEER IN THE HALL OF ONE OF THE THREE DORMS. . . . (Call to action, etc.)

**May 7, 1981:** Student Affairs Committee unanimously approves changes to the Alcohol Policy, including changing the title from “Alcohol Policy” to “Alcohol Guidelines.”

**1985:** Drinking age in Massachusetts raised from 20 to 21.

**May, 1985:** Revised alcohol policy in response to change in Massachusetts law. Robert A. Fink, Director of College Center and Student Activities, explains the changes in Stonehill’s alcohol policy to Daniel J. Mogado, Easton Town Administrator (October 21, 1985):

“Basic differences from our former policy include the prohibition of alcohol from the underclass dormitories regardless of the students’ age. Also, more severe sanctions were instituted. The first offense is two weekends off campus; a second violation results in the loss of residence for a minimum of one semester. This policy is very strictly enforced and the sanctions more severe than those of other colleges.” (etc.)

**1986:** Student Affairs Committee recommends the establishment of an *ad hoc* committee to develop a College-wide Comprehensive Alcohol Policy.

**March 6, 1986:** An *Ad-Hoc Committee to Evaluate the Alcohol Guidelines* publishes a summary of its findings and recommendations. The committee recommends more education and social programming. “The final recommendation is that the “Ad Hoc Committee to Evaluate the Alcohol Guidelines” be disbanded, and in its place, a group be assembled to follow through on the above A-E recommendations.”

- Stonehill students annoyed by the “boring” aspect of campus life and by the administration’s strict alcohol policies.

**February 6, 1987:** *Ad-Hoc* Committee distributes guidelines and recommendations for the formulation of a Comprehensive Alcohol Policy.

**March 3, 1987:** Stonehill responds to new federal guidelines requiring that colleges participating in federal student financial aid programs (Pell, Perkins, GLS, College Work-Study, etc.) have, no later than July 1, 1987, “a drug abuse prevention program in operation that it determines is accessible to any officer, employee, or student at the Institution.”

**April 14, 1988:** The Student Government Association and the Residence Council put forward proposals to the Student Affairs Committee to institute a “party policy” allowing parties in the dormitories and relaxing some of the restrictions. The “motion carries” (*i.e.* rules are relaxed).

**April 19, 1988:** Dean Charles R. Ratto writes to President MacPhaidin strongly objecting to relaxing of party restrictions.

**1990:** Dean Saltreli is awarded a two-year FIPSE grant to assist Stonehill in its development of a multifaceted Alcohol and Drug program. Stonehill joins the BACCHUS Health Education Network.

**April 25, 1990:** Alcohol Policy adjusted slightly by College Council.

**Fall, 1991:** According to a Stonehill survey (n = 600), 70% of students “binge” (had 5 or more drinks at a sitting in the previous 2 weeks).

**April 23, 1992:** Alcohol Policy updated. Community service component is increased.

**1992:** The FIPSE grant was renewed for two additional years.

**1993:** Dr. Henry Wechsler of the Harvard School of Public Health publishes “Health and Behavioral Consequences of Binge Drinking in College: A National Survey of Students at 140 Campuses.”

**July 12, 1993:** Survey results published from the CORE Drug and Alcohol Survey.

- 70% of students “binge” (had 5 or more drinks at a sitting in the previous 2 weeks).
- 87% of students drink (used alcohol in the past 30 days).
- 82% of underage (younger than 21) students drink (indicated alcohol use at least once in the previous 30 days).

**1994:** The FIPSE grant terminates and the Student Affairs Division budget takes over support for the part-time AOD Coordinator position.

**Fall, 1996:** Dean Saltreli begins meeting with the Director of the Counseling and Testing Center to evaluate the AOD Prevention Program on campus.

**Fall, 1997:** Survey results published from the CORE Drug and Alcohol Survey:

- 71% of students “binge” (had 5 or more drinks at a sitting in the previous 2 weeks). Regional average: 52%.

- The 1997 CORE Survey of Stonehill College students confirmed that not only were people getting hurt due to excessive drinking, but the quality of life of the Stonehill campus was negatively affected by binge drinking.

**Spring, 1997:** Dean Saltrelli calls together an *ad hoc* Student Affairs Task Force to evaluate and enhance the existing Stonehill College AOD Prevention Program.

**August, 1998:** Fr. Bartley MacPhaidin establishes the Task Force on Alcohol and Other Drug Concerns.

**Fall, 1999:** Survey results published from the CORE Drug and Alcohol Survey.

- 66% of students “binge” (had 5 or more drinks at a sitting in the previous 2 weeks). Regional average: 62%.

**March 5, 1999:** Task Force on Alcohol and Other Drug Concerns report published. Task Force recommendations implemented in academic year 1999/2000.

- In response, many initiatives to respond to the alcohol culture have begun at Stonehill including “Alcohol 101,” a CD Rom program in Freshmen Orientation, sponsoring “Alcohol as a College Women’s Health Issue,” a creative contest, and providing more alcohol-free programming.

**Spring, 2000:** From a report by Dr. Neal Price, Director of the Counseling and Testing Center at Stonehill College:

“The CORE survey was implemented again in November 1999 and the results are very encouraging when compared with those of the 1997 CORE and with the 1997 and 1999 regional ‘control’ groups of colleges. As can be seen in the accompanying graphs and tables the AOD culture at Stonehill has changed, quite significantly in some areas. . . . The nature of the change in the AOD culture at Stonehill is positive yet directly opposite from that which is being reported nationally at other colleges and universities. Where we see a significant decrease in frequent binge drinking, others have seen an increase. The change in drinking behaviors at Stonehill has had a direct and positive effect on the quality of life on campus. This unequivocal change is due to the coordinated hard work of many of the staff and administrators of the Student Affairs Division who look forward to building on these gains in the future.”

**Fall 2006:** Survey results published from the CORE Drug and Alcohol Survey.

- 68% of students “binge” (had 5 or more drinks at a sitting in the previous 2 weeks). National average: 47%.

**Fall 2009:** Survey results published from the CORE Drug and Alcohol Survey.

- 65% of students “binge” (had 5 or more drinks at a sitting in the previous 2 weeks). National average: 47%.

**January 22, 2010:** President Mark Cregan, C.S.C. assembles an Alcohol Task Force, “a cross-divisional task force, with student representation, charged with studying, defining and reaching conclusions concerning the College’s view on the use of alcohol and its impact on campus.”

## Faculty Mailing

December 2010

Dear Faculty:

We are writing to update you on an important initiative that will have a positive impact on the culture of the institution on many levels. At the request of President Cregan, an Alcohol Task Force was formed in January 2010 and charged with working cross-divisionally to study, define, and reach conclusions concerning the College's views on the use and abuse of alcohol on our campus. Since then, the Task Force has been working to assess the current alcohol culture at Stonehill and develop recommendations in an effort to reduce high-risk drinking levels on campus. The conversations at Task Force meetings and in small groups have been engaging and substantive, and we would like to share some preliminary findings with you.

A major area of focus of the group has been to examine the connection between alcohol consumption and academic performance. We are all aware that "drinking affects thinking," but how should we tackle such a complex and persistent issue? We believe that awareness is the first step. To that end we have enclosed a fact sheet with both national and local (Stonehill) data linking alcohol use and academic performance. Through the dissemination of this information, we are hoping to increase awareness around this issue and encourage open dialogue among students, faculty and administration regarding the significant negative impacts of high-risk drinking.

We are also looking for faculty leadership on this issue and are hoping to identify individuals who are interested in assisting with the implementation of the finalized recommendations. If you are interested in learning more about our work and the proposed recommendations, please feel free to contact either one of us.

Lastly, we wanted to provide you with information regarding available resources on campus should you encounter a student you are concerned about, related to alcohol use or some other issue. Included in this letter is a brochure that may assist you in working with students of concern to identify the most appropriate resources for them.

We thank you in advance for your willingness to engage in conversation regarding this important topic, and we welcome your leadership as we move forward with the implementation of the Task Force's recommendations.

Sincerely,



Pauline Dobrowski  
Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/  
Dean of Students



Todd Gernes, Ph.D.  
Assistant Dean of Academic Achievement and  
Director of General Education  
Assoc Professor of History & American Studies

# The Impact of Alcohol on Academic Performance: Summarizing the Research

## Research Finding #1: High-risk drinking negatively impacts class attendance

- ✓ Frequent binge drinkers are more likely to miss a class, fall behind in their schoolwork (Wechsler et al., 1998)
- ✓ The number of drinks consumed correlates positively with the number of classes missed (AlcoholEdu, 2008-2009)
- ✓ Frequency of alcohol consumption was associated positively with absenteeism from classes disliked (Wyatt, 1992)

## Research Finding #2: High-risk drinking negatively impacts time spent studying

- ✓ Alcohol consumption has a negative predictive effect on study hours under all definitions of drinking (binge, frequent binge, drunkenness, and frequent drunkenness) (Wolaver, 2002)
- ✓ More frequent use of alcohol usually produces larger negative effects on study hours, with frequent drunkenness having the largest negative effect (Wolaver, 2002)
- ✓ There is a negative relationship between heavy episodic alcohol use and the time students spend on academics (Porter & Pryor, 2007)

## Research Finding #3: Inverse relationship between high-risk drinking and grade point average

- ✓ Binge drinking two or more times in a typical two week period is linked to significantly lower semester grades (Pascarella et al., 2007)
- ✓ The probability of getting a high GPA significantly decreases as the frequency of heavy episodic drinking increases (Porter & Pryor, 2007)
- ✓ The heaviest drinkers obtain the lowest grades (Preseley, 1993)
- ✓ The amount of alcohol consumed correlates significantly with GPA (Singleton, R. 2007)
- ✓ Alcohol consumption has a negative predictive effect on GPA under all definitions of drinking (binge, frequent binge, drunkenness, and frequent drunkenness) (Wolaver, 2002)
- ✓ Heavy college drinking predicts a reduction in the probability of having an "A" average cumulative GPA (Wolaver, 2002)
- ✓ There is a significant relationship between GPA and the percent of students who drink or are heavy drinkers (Engs et al., 2001)
- ✓ Among drinkers, the lower the GPA, the higher the percentage who drank or were heavy drinkers (Engs et al., 2001)
- ✓ Those students with 4.0 GPAs consumed a third fewer drinks compared to those with GPAs under 2.0 (Engs et al., 2001)
- ✓ There is a significant decline in GPA when comparing abstainers to heavier drinking categories (Rau & Durand, 2000)

AlcoholEdu® for College National Survey Database, 2008-2009, Outside The Classroom.

Engs, R.C., Diebold, B.A. and Hanson, D.J. (1996). The Drinking Patterns and Problems of a National Sample of College Students. *Journal of Alcohol and Drug Education*, 41(3), 13-33.

Pascarella, E.T., Goodman, K.M., Seifert, T.A., Tagliapietra-Nicoli, G., Park, S., Whitt, E.J. (2007). College Student Binge Drinking and Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Replication and Extension. *Journal of College Student Development*, 48(6), 715-727.

Porter, S.R., & Pryor, J. (2007). The Effects of Heavy Episodic Alcohol Use on Student Engagement, Academic Performance, and Time Use. *Journal of College Student Development*, 48(4), 455-467.

Preseley, C.A., Meilman, P.W., Lyella, R. (1993). Alcohol and Drugs on American College Campuses: Use, Consequences, and Perceptions of the Campus Environment, Volume 1: 1989/91, 105.

Rau, W. & Durand, A. (2000). The Academic Ethic and College Grades: Does Hard Work Help Students to "Make the Grade"? *Sociology of Education*, 73( 1), 19-38.

Singleton, R.A. (2007). Collegiate Alcohol Consumption and Academic Performance. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 68(4), 548-555.

Wechsler, H., Dowdall, G., Maenner, G., Gledhill-Hoyt, J., Hang, L. (1998). Changes in Binge Drinking and Related Problems among American College Students Between 1993 and 1997: Results of the Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Survey. *Journal of American College Health*, 47(2), 57-68.

Wolaver, A. (2002). Effect of Heavy Drinking in College on Student Effort, Grade Point Average, and Major Choice. *Contemporary Economic Policy*, 20(4), 415-428.

# Alcohol Use at Stonehill: Perception and Reality

## *Student and Community Perceptions*

While most members of our community believe that high-risk drinking among Stonehill students is in line with national averages, survey data from multiple sources tells a different story. Compared to peer institutions and by national standards, Stonehill is high on the alcohol-consumption scale, from admission to graduation, a pattern that has remained consistent for decades.

- According to the Health and Behavior Assessment (2009), when asked if they were concerned about their own alcohol use, most Stonehill students replied, “No” (97%). They also did not believe that alcohol use diminishes their academic performance (89%) or negatively impacts their health (76%). When asked if they would like to cut down on their alcohol use, the majority of Stonehill students responded in the negative (85%).
- According to the CORE Survey (2009), most students think that alcohol use at Stonehill is less than or about the same as other colleges (90%). A relatively small number of students (10%) think that alcohol use at Stonehill is greater compared to other colleges.

## *The Real Story*

- 65% of Stonehill students surveyed reported engaging in high-risk drinking or binge drinking in the past two weeks, compared to a national average of 43%, according to the CORE Survey (2009).
- Stonehill students enter the College binge drinking at a rate of 34%. The national rate is roughly 20%. The percentage of first-year students who binge drink increased from 34% to 54% (20%) during the first six months of college, according to the CIRP Freshman Survey (2008) and Your First College Year Survey (2009). Overall, Stonehill students binge drink at significantly higher rates than the national average.

## *The College Effect*

It is well known that the frequency of high-risk drinking or binge drinking increases during the first few weeks of college as students experience the freedom of living away from home for the first time. This is often referred to as the “college effect.” Stonehill students, unfortunately, demonstrate this phenomenon all too clearly, and this significantly affects their academic performance.

- The CORE Survey (2009) reveals that 25% of students reported missing a class during the past year due to drinking or drug use, while 19% reported poor test or homework performance. 77% of students reported having a hangover during past year, and 19% admitted to driving under the influence. 49% of Stonehill students had a memory loss as a result of their drinking and drug use. 51% did something they regretted while under the influence, and 12% reported being taken advantage of sexually while intoxicated.
- On average, the majority of first-year students at Stonehill spend about the same number of hours partying as they do studying (3-10 per week), according to the CIRP Freshman Survey (2008) and Your First College Year Survey (2009).

## The TEM of STEM

### *Technology, Engineering & Math Options Flourish*

**IF THEY ARE TO PROSPER**, modern societies need the STEM disciplines—science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The College’s accomplishments in educating a new generation of scientifically literate students are increasingly well known, but our significant progress in developing technology, engineering and mathematics options for our students has had a lower profile.

During the last three years, however, the eight members of the Math and Computer Science Departments have published three books, 15 academic papers and attended professional conferences on three continents. At the same time, the departments are highly student-focused, as these examples show:

- **Dual Degrees** Re-established in 1999 and expanded in 2009, our 3+2 engineering program with the University of Notre Dame is open to qualified students interested in all areas of engineering—computer science, civic, electrical, mechanical, aerospace and chemical. Three years in Easton followed by two in South Bend give students degrees from Stonehill and Notre Dame. At present, 22 students are in the program. According to Cathy Pieronek, assistant dean of academic affairs at Notre Dame’s College of Engineering, “Among our dual-degree programs, Stonehill certainly is the jewel in the crown. Stonehill prepares its students extremely well for the rigor of a Notre Dame engineering education, and students have found the transition between institutions to be an easy one, given the heritage that we share.”

- **Creativity** With Computer Science Professor Robert Dugan, Ryan Curtis ’10 and Scott Markoski ’10 created an

interactive mobile touring application for their capstone project. A touring app that gives smart phone users an interactive option while visiting Stonehill, Gaido was designed to help Enrollment Management and Marketing expand its reach to prospective students. Daniel Ellis ’12 is now porting Gaido to the iPhone [right].

- **Student Presentations**

Working with Math Professor Hsin-hao Su, Meghan Galiardi ’11, Daniel Perry ’11, Patrick Clark ’12 and Daniel Bouchard ’12 have solved several advanced graph theory problems and presented at the Midwestern Conference on Combinatorics, Cryptography and Computing. Galiardi and Perry have published their results in the *Journal of Combinatorial Mathematics and*



*Combinatorial Computing*, while Clark and Bouchard are awaiting word on their submission.

- **Distinguished Teaching**

In September, Professor Norah Esty became the third member of the Math Department to receive the College’s Louise F. Hegarty Excellence in Teaching Award. See page 12 for an interview with Esty, whose engaging approach is winning students to the challenge and joy of math.

“Our offerings in computer science, engineering and mathematics are all vibrant and rigorous. Our well-prepared graduates get top placements in industry and attend some of the best graduate schools,” notes Ralph Bravaco, chair of the Math and Computer Science Departments.

## Alcohol Abuse

### *Five Ways Parents Can Help*

**MISSED CLASSES, POOR GRADES,** personal injuries, opportunities lost, trouble with the law—on a weekly basis, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs Pauline Dobrowski sees the consequences of bad student behavior fueled by alcohol. Here, Dobrowski, who heads Stonehill’s Task Force on Alcohol, shares five tips for parents on how they can help their children navigate one of the most challenging aspects of college life today.

- **Keep Talking** Start an open and frank conversation about alcohol with your son or daughter. Explore the college’s expectations and rules on the topic with your children and encourage

them to develop expectations for their own behavior.

- **Don’t Glamorize** Try to avoid reliving your “glory days” of drinking, as it could send mixed messages.

- **Know the Facts** Talk about the basic facts relative to alcohol and the potential negative effects associated with alcohol abuse.

- **Share Options** Contrary to many students’ beliefs, not all students drink. Therefore, be sure to talk about making the decision not to drink and how best to find alternatives on campus.

- **Be Available** Encourage open lines of communication so that your child knows you are available if he or she needs support around this issue.

To read an extended version of this interview with Dobrowski, visit [www.stonehillalumnimagazine.org](http://www.stonehillalumnimagazine.org).