

Report of the Committee on Alcohol Policy in Yale College

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Background

Most undergraduates consume alcoholic beverages. Approximately 85% of college students report drinking alcohol in the past year, and 72% report drinking in the last 30 days (Core Institute, 2004). Although college-bound high school seniors report fewer occasions of heavy drinking than their non-college bound peers (Johnston, O'Malley, & Bachman, 2001), college students tend to catch and sometimes surpass their age-matched peers who are not attending college. Rates of heavy alcohol use are higher for both men and women who are fulltime undergraduates compared to others in this age group (Johnston et al., 2001; National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 2001; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2001).

College student drinking is often characterized by what has been termed *heavy episodic alcohol consumption* (the older term is *binge drinking*). Over 40% of college students report heavy episodic drinking (defined as the consumption of four or more drinks for women and five or more drinks for men during a single drinking occasion) at least once during the previous two week period (e.g., Johnston, O'Malley, & Bachman, 1999; Wechsler, Davenport, Dowdall, Moeykens, & Castillo, 1994; Wechsler, Lee, Kuo, & Lee, 2000). Although high school seniors have decreased their occasions of heavy drinking over the past two decades, college students have maintained a high rate of heavy episodic alcohol use (Johnston et al., 2001).

Alcohol use by Yale students is not atypical of the general college student population. In the year 2000, 77% of Yale students reported consuming alcohol in the past 30 days, and 2% reported consuming alcohol on 20 or more days during this same time period. Rates of heavy episodic drinking were also similar to national samples of college students; 41% of Yale College students reported at least one episode of heavy drinking during the past two weeks. Only 13% of Yale students qualified as frequent heavy episodic drinkers (3 or more times in the past 2 weeks), however, compared to rates of about 20% in national studies (Wechsler et al., 2000). The Yale data are based on a definition of five or more drinks for both men and women, so overall rates may be slight underestimates relative to the gender-specific standards (four or more for women).

Despite these high rates of binge drinking, it is important to recognize that average levels of consumption are relatively low in the student population, with a mean weekly consumption of 4.22 standard drinks. Data from a smaller sample of Yale students in 2005 showed somewhat lower rates of drinking, although differences may be due to the fact that assessments took place during the summer months. In this survey, 70% of students reported any drinking, 0.7% reported daily drinking, and there was a mean weekly consumption of 3.55 standard drinks.

In the past, heavy drinking in college has been perceived by many to be a developmentally appropriate behavior. More recently, heavy collegiate drinking has been recognized as contributing both to acute negative consequences and participation in other

risky behaviors that carry their own negative outcomes (Hingson, Heeren, Winter, & Wechsler, 2005; Hingson, Heeren, Zakocs, Kopstein, & Wechsler, 2002). As a result of their drinking, about 25% of college students report negative academic consequences, 11% report they have damaged property under the influence of alcohol, and 5% are involved with police or campus security (NIAAA, 2002). Students who get drunk at least once a week are at higher risk for alcohol-related mortality and injury. Approximately 1,700 college students die each year from alcohol-related accidents (Hingson et al., 2005). This is in addition to an estimated 600,000 alcohol-related injuries, almost 700,000 assaults, more than 90,000 sexual assaults, and 474,000 incidents of engaging in unprotected sex thought to be alcohol-influenced. In 2001, 2.8 million college students drove a car while under the influence of alcohol (Hingson et al., 2005). Getting drunk affects not only the drinker, but others associated with him or her. Although students who get drunk at least weekly are 3 times as likely to be injured due to their own drinking, they are also 3 times as likely to be injured in a motor vehicle crash caused by someone else who was drinking and twice as likely to be taken advantage of sexually by someone who was drinking than students who do not get drunk.

Although rates of drinking and driving by Yale students in 2000 were low (13%) relative to national samples (31%), rates of other negative alcohol-related consequences were substantial and similar to national norms. In the 2000 survey, 56% of Yale students reported experiencing hangovers after drinking, 51% reported nausea or vomiting, 42% reported engaging in behavior they later regretted, 37% reported missing classes, 27% reported blackouts, 11% reported alcohol-related injuries, and 6% reported destroying property. Data from the summer 2005 survey showed similar patterns of negative consequences: 66% of student reported hangovers, 55% reported nausea and vomiting, 34% reported blackouts, 10% reported driving after drinking, and 6% reported destroying property.

Yale students suffer significant health consequences as a result of alcohol use. During a typical weekend, the emergency department sees a number of college students for acute alcohol intoxication and alcohol-related injuries. In addition to the emergency department visits, the University Health Service (UHS) admits students to the infirmary each week for acute alcohol intoxication. There is a range of severity of alcohol intoxication, with the most serious cases requiring the use of a ventilator and breathing tube. Counselors in the Mental Health Department of UHS treat many students for alcohol and other drug problems, and some physical health problems such as sexually transmitted diseases and unintended pregnancies are associated with alcohol intoxication.

In addition to acute alcohol related consequences, heavy drinking in college can set the stage for the development of alcohol use disorders during and beyond the college years. The median age of onset for alcohol use disorders coincides with this time period (Kessler et al., 1997), and college students are more likely to be diagnosed as alcohol abusers than their non-college-attending peers (Slutske, 2005). One study found that 31% of college students met diagnostic criteria for alcohol abuse with an additional 6% meeting criteria for the more severe diagnosis of alcohol dependence (Knight et al., 2002). Clinically significant alcohol problems are evident among Yale students based on

past survey research. In the 2000 Yale survey, 7% of students indicated that they felt they had a problem with alcohol, and in the 2005 survey, 11% of students reported feeling like they needed alcohol or were dependent on alcohol.

Students in their first year of college are particularly vulnerable to alcohol misuse (Schulenberg, et al., 2001). According to the report of the task force on college student drinking commissioned by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA, 2002), “anecdotal evidence suggests that the first 6 weeks of enrollment are critical to first-year student success. Because many students initiate heavy drinking during these early days of college, the potential exists for excessive alcohol consumption to interfere with successful adaptation to campus life.” In addition to the stress of the transition from high school to college, there is a significant decrease in adult supervision of students’ behavior on college entry. Parental influence is replaced largely by peer influence that is permissive if not encouraging of heavy drinking. In addition, alcohol is easily accessible as are contexts in which heavy alcohol use and related risk behaviors are accepted or even promoted. The college experience therefore appears to facilitate both heavy drinking and other behavioral risks. In both 2000 and 2005, Yale students were asked if they believed that the campus environment promoted alcohol use, and 83% and 87%, respectively, answered “yes” to this question.

Fortunately, most students will mature out of heavy drinking when they leave college and assume adult responsibilities (Jackson, Sher, Gotham, & Wood, 2001). Nonetheless, heavy drinking during college increases the risk for the development of problems after graduation (Schulenberg et al., 1996). Although the college environment may play a key role in the exacerbation of alcohol-related problems during college, students who experience the most significant problems during and after college are often those who have established patterns of heavy drinking prior to college entry. Consistent with this notion, the NIAAA task force suggested that “colleges and universities inherit” a substantial number of drinking problems that developed earlier in adolescence.

In addition to early drinking experience, a number of individual characteristics are associated with problematic drinking both before and during the college years. These include a family history of alcoholism, personality characteristics associated with impulsivity and sensation seeking, and strong beliefs about the positive effects of alcohol (Baer, 2002; Sher et al., 1996; Sher et al., 1999; Zucker et al., 1995). Primary prevention programs targeting the entire student body may not be sufficient to prevent alcohol-related harm to these high-risk individuals. Colleges and universities may need specific programs designed to identify and intervene with these students.

The NIAAA task force report on college student drinking recommended a 3-in-1 approach to alcohol policy on college campuses (NIAAA, 2002). This approach incorporates policies at community, campus, and individual levels. The report recommends specific strategies at each level that have been shown to be effective with college students. The policies recommended by the Committee are consistent with the 3-in-1 approach and the use of empirically validated strategies to address problems at each of these levels. Campus wide prevention efforts are designed to create a culture that

promotes the responsible use of alcohol among students of legal age and reduces the risks of negative consequences associated with drinking by underage and legal-aged students. These policies are the centerpiece of most college and university alcohol policies and form the core of the policies recommended by this Committee. At the same time, the Committee recognizes the importance of policies targeting the larger community and high-risk students. As the NIAAA task force suggested, “mutually reinforcing” policies at the campus and community levels have the greatest potential for affecting long-term change in the culture of college student drinking (NIAAA, 2002). However, campus and community-based policies may be insufficient to protect high-risk students from significant harm associated with their drinking behavior. Thus, efforts to identify and intervene with students at greatest risk are an integral part of the recommendations that follow.

The goals of Yale College’s alcohol-relevant policies are to: (a) create a culture that promotes the responsible use of alcohol among students of legal age, (b) reduce the risks of negative consequences to the individual and the overall student body associated with drinking by underage and legal-aged students, and (c) prevent drinking patterns that lead to the development of life-long alcohol problems. In February 2005, President Levin appointed an ad hoc committee to study the policies concerning alcohol consumption in Yale College and formulate recommendations about how to have a positive impact on the health and safety of our students with respect to their drinking behavior. The Dean of Yale College, Peter Salovey, was asked to chair this task force, and it met weekly in March, April, and May and then resumed its weekly meetings with the start of the academic year in September, concluding its weekly meetings in December 2005. The Committee included masters of residential colleges (Judith Krauss, Richard Schottenfeld), a residential college dean (Steven Lassonde), professionals from the University Health Service (Paul Genecin, Lorraine Siggins), an attorney in the General Counsel’s Office (Caroline Hendel), faculty members with research expertise in alcohol-related behavior (William Corbin, Linda Degutis, Richard Schottenfeld), a varsity athletic team coach (James Jones), the Dean of Student Affairs (Betty Trachtenberg), a representative of the President’s Office (Nina Glickson), and two undergraduates (Christopher Connelly, Renee Lopes).

The statistics described above are revealing – that heavy drinking is common among Yale undergraduates but not more so than on other college campuses – although they only can tell part of the story. The Committee also arranged to meet with different groups on campus for a more in-depth and qualitative look at the drinking culture. These included separate meetings with a group of freshman counselors, athletic team captains, leaders of fraternities, residential college social activity committee chairs, randomly selected freshmen, randomly selected upperclassmen, and the Dean’s Student Advisory Committee. We also arranged a meeting with the residential college deans, the Council of Masters, and representatives from the Yale College Executive Committee (the committee that adjudicates violations of conduct regulations by students in Yale College). Dr. Marie Baker, the substance abuse counselor at the University Health Service, also met with the Committee as did Chief James Perrotti and Lieutenant Michael Patten of the

Yale Police Department. Finally, the Committee reviewed the policies concerning alcohol and social functions at 33 colleges and universities across the country.

The Committee's overall conclusion from these various information-gathering activities is that drinking problems on campus are the consequence of a culture that encourages heavy alcohol consumption, a dearth of obvious alternative ways to "hang out with friends" that do not involve drinking, and a lack of an adult presence in locations and social situations in which problem drinking is common (e.g., among freshmen on the Old Campus, at fraternity parties on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings). The Committee concluded that although Yale College's rules and regulations could be fine-tuned to some extent to reduce problems (and it makes specific recommendations along these lines), addressing these broader issues is of paramount concern. Consequently, the Committee also recommends specific approaches for addressing these other issues. The Committee also concluded that College regulations that focus on student safety as the first priority (e.g., students are not punished when they drink so excessively that they are transported to UHS or a hospital emergency room) are praiseworthy and effective, and they should be retained.

The kinds of interventions that can be recommended by the Committee are constrained by our first obligation, which is to conform to the laws of the State of Connecticut prohibiting the service of alcohol to individuals below the age of 21. The Committee submits the following recommendations for consideration.

Recommendations Concerning Alcohol Education

All residential college masters and deans, YCDO personnel with decanal titles, athletic coaches, and other staff members who oversee student life should receive formal training about alcohol use and abuse, risky drinking, and relevant University policies. Training should foster the development of consensus and lead to consistency in the approaches and responses of those trained and can be tailored to the needs and backgrounds of these various groups rather than be "generic." For some groups – masters and deans – a facilitated discussion may be more valuable than an alcohol education program per se. The Committee especially recommends a joint forum for the 24 residential college masters and deans in order to create partnerships in the colleges concerning enforcement of alcohol-related regulations and implementation of harm-reduction strategies. These activities should be conducted annually so that they are experienced as continuing and ongoing.

The training provided to freshman counselors should be examined and augmented if necessary. Training could be from one of the professional organizations that provide it (such as the TIPS Program, "a three-hour program designed to teach students to prevent intoxication, drunk driving, and underage drinking among their peers. This program addresses concerns specific to students, residence life, Greek organizations and all aspects of university life. All sessions are taught by certified TIPS trainers, using video and printed materials to facilitate discussion of the course content," see <http://www.gettips.com/>). Special educational opportunities should be developed for key

opinion leaders among the student body including athletic team captains, fraternity and sorority officers, and leaders of student organizations such as the various singing groups, marching band, theater ensembles, and campus publications.

Materials to promote awareness of the dangers of risky drinking as well as services available to students could be disseminated broadly. These might include fact and phone number cards, pamphlets about harm reduction strategies, etc. In addition, materials should be created for use by masters in their “fireside chats” with students as well as for deans when they counsel students.

Recommendations Concerning Transport, Counseling, and Executive Committee Actions

We firmly believe that (a) students should be encouraged to seek out the services of UHS, (b) education about risky behavior is the best guarantor of students’ physical and psychological well-being, and (c) awareness of University medical resources is critical when students are endangered. In the spirit of these convictions, the Committee reaffirms the principle that fear of punishment should not be a barrier to help-seeking in an emergency situation involving alcohol. Severely intoxicated individuals and those students with them should always seek help when intoxication threatens to lead to loss of consciousness, unresponsiveness, and/or the inability to stand, walk, or otherwise behave in a coherent manner. Such individuals should be transported to the Emergency Room of Yale-New Haven Hospital. Seriously intoxicated students who are able to walk will continue to be encouraged to spend the night at the University Health Services. Students should continue to be made aware of the resources available to them in addressing such an emergency, and we should continue to impress upon them that seeking such help will not only *not* result in a penalty for the associated drinking but that this course of action is laudatory.

We recommend, however, that all students transported in this way receive alcohol counseling by a substance abuse counselor at the UHS Mental Health Clinic. The residential college dean will follow-up with the student to ensure the counseling has taken place. Further, any student who comes to the attention of the Yale College Executive Committee for an alcohol-related offense or any offense occurring when the student was intoxicated – usually this will be destruction of property, assault, public urination, or similar behaviors in which alcohol has played a role – should receive alcohol counseling. If the student fails to attend counseling in a timely way (to be determined by the Chief Psychiatrist of the Mental Health Clinic), the substance abuse counselor will contact the student’s dean to assist in arranging an appointment. Once again, the residential college dean will follow-up with the student to ensure the counseling has taken place.

Finally, an annual workshop for members of the Executive Committee should be scheduled each fall at which major issues likely to come before the group can be discussed from a student health and safety point of view with relevant professionals. The workshop would include presentations by UHS and YCDO staff on alcohol and drug use, sexual assault, and academic dishonesty, among other issues. The Executive Committee

would also be provided by the YCDO annually with a set of guidelines concerning recommended sanctions for various offenses in order to ensure better calibration from year to year.

Recommendations Concerning the Reduction of Risky Alcohol Use by Freshmen

One of the most strongly stated concerns of the Committee focused on the lack of an adult presence on the Old Campus. Our youngest and most vulnerable students do not benefit as obviously from the watchful eyes of the residential college masters and deans compared to students living in residential colleges. The Committee recommends the creation of five apartments carved from Old Campus spaces so that an adult (or adult couple) could be available as a resource in emergency situations, serve as advisors to the Freshman Counselors, and otherwise be involved in the lives of freshman students. Each adult couple would work with two residential colleges. These Old Campus Resident Fellows should not be current graduate students but rather faculty members, other staff members, or post-doctoral associates/fellows.

Freshmen living on Old Campus (indeed, all students) should have available to them a late night gathering place for socializing with friends on weekend evenings. A site close to or on Old Campus would be most desirable. In addition, creating late-night gathering places on campus that do not involve the serving or consumption of alcohol could provide an alternative to off-campus and other parties for students who would prefer not to drink. Such gathering places might include the use of a section of Payne-Whitney Gymnasium as a late-night game room (with pool tables, videogames, etc.) including food and non-alcoholic beverages, or a coffee shop with live music (perhaps featuring student bands and other entertainers).

A pamphlet concerning risky alcohol use and the policies of Yale College (as well as personal decision-making and responsibility for oneself and fellow students) should be sent to students and parents prior to their arrival at Yale and included on the Yale College website. These print materials could replace the current "summer issue" of the *Yale Daily News* and *Yale Herald* presently mailed to students, with their heavy emphasis on stories glorifying student drinking culture.

In general, Yale needs to create a sense of community for freshmen with respect to reducing risky drinking. Freshman Counselors will be expected to meet with those freshmen who have been transported for detoxification (as they sometimes do now). Such conversations may lead to suggestions or solutions and might strengthen the sense of a safe and healthy freshman community.

Recommendations Concerning Major Campus Social Events

The Committee examined some of the major social events at which students are at-risk for drinking dangerous quantities of alcohol. One such event is tailgating at home football games, especially the Yale-Harvard game. The Committee endorses the policies put in place by the Department of Athletics beginning with home football games in November 2005. These policies prohibit drinking games and associated paraphernalia at

tailgates, prohibit activities on the roofs of trucks and trailers parked in the tailgating area, and end student tailgating with the start of the third-quarter of play.

Other key social events such as those surrounding Tap Nights (for singing groups, fraternities and senior societies), Fall Show, Halloween, Winter Ball, and Spring Fling should be examined to ensure that students who do not want to drink can participate fully and without stigma and that opportunities for risky drinking are minimized. Large-scale social events organized by the Yale College Social Activities Committee should encourage the desirability and enjoyment of being alcohol-free. In an event before The Game, student bands might provide entertainment. Plenty of food and water should be available further increasing attendance.

The Committee articulates the following recommendations for all social events:

- Grain alcohol (e.g., Everclear) should be prohibited on campus.
- Air voids should not be distributed by the Dining Service to students hosting parties.
- Bottled water should be distributed without charge to students during all social functions.
- Events should be structured in ways so as not to provide excessive time and opportunity for risky drinking (e.g., the Yale Symphony Orchestra midnight show on Halloween might be moved to 10 p.m.).

Recommendations Concerning Alternative Student Activities

Students should have the opportunity to participate in activities on campus that do not involve alcohol. Indeed, they should be able to freely enjoy such activities that do not pressure them to drink when they may not wish to do so. This report has already recommended for freshmen an on-campus, late night gathering place for socializing with friends on weekend evenings, preferably close to or on the Old Campus. We want to emphasize the necessity of such gathering places, not just for freshmen, but for all undergraduates. We encourage the Yale College Council Student Activities Committee to continue to plan weekend parties/events that encourage social activity without drinking.

The following list provides suggestions from students for late-night (11:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.) activities that would not involve the service of alcohol. Some of these activities already take place, and the Committee encourages their continuation. Locations are suggested, but other venues may be more appropriate. All activities should include food and non-alcoholic beverages. Major social activities of these kinds should be available every weekend during term time. In addition, we recommend a large screen movie theater on campus; if a conventional location is not possible, perhaps this could be an outdoor activity during warmer weather.

Some activities suggested by Yale College students for weekend evenings:

Payne Whitney Gymnasium:

- Game-room with pool tables, videogames, etc.
- 3 vs. 3 basketball games/tournaments
- Dance lessons – ballroom, salsa, etc.
- Dance contests
- Contradance
- Yoga or Pilates classes
- Availability of the 4th floor exercise room

Commons or Residential College Dining Halls or Common Rooms:

- Coffee shop with live music – students bands, DJ, folksingers, etc.
- Dance lessons or dance contests (see above)
- Butteries serving snacks and sodas

Whitney Humanities Center, SSS 114, LC 101, or other locations:

- Films (theme nights)

Cultural Houses:

- Films
- Dance lessons or dance contests (see above)
- Late night ethnic food “tasting”
- Cooking classes

Residential Colleges:

- Improvisational theater contest
- Board game night
- Discounted tickets to local plays and movies
- Regular buses to local movie theaters for first-run films

Recommendations Concerning the Calendar: Bulldog Days, Freshman Orientation, Friday Classes

Certain cyclical activities have become traditional opportunities for risky alcohol use, particularly by freshmen and prospective students. Both Bulldog Days, covering two days in April, and Freshman Orientation, which begins the Friday before classes start in the fall, have become times when alcohol is readily available and students have the freedom and opportunity to party. A related issue concerns the disappearance of Friday classes, which has moved the beginning of the week’s social calendar to Thursday evening.

Bulldog Days. This two-day admissions recruiting event brings high school students and their parents to the campus as admitted applicants to Yale College consider whether to enroll. Some Yale students believe that this is the opportunity to demonstrate the enthusiasm with which Yalies party. The Committee offers the following recommendations regarding Bulldog Days:

- Encourage Yale students to declare Bulldog Days “alcohol free” due to the number of individuals on campus well below the legal drinking age.
- Encourage current students to agree that the service, possession, and consumption of alcohol will not be part of any of the activities planned for campus.
- Orient all students hosting visiting “pre-frosh” — including athletes — by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions concerning their role in not promoting illegal and dangerous activities by these young visitors to campus.
- Warn admitted students that participation during Bulldog Days in drinking or the use of drugs is unacceptable.
- Increase the proportion of upperclassmen in residential colleges (rather than freshmen on Old Campus) serving as Bulldog Days hosts and provide clear guidelines to all hosts.

Freshman Orientation. Beginning with the Friday “move-in” day, Freshman Orientation — and the accompanying environment on campus known as “Camp Yale” — presents a time of great risk for excessive drinking because many freshmen are spending the first moments of their lives not under the eyes of their parents. The Committee makes the following recommendations about Freshman Orientation:

- The Yale College Dean’s Office and/or the residential college masters and deans should organize all Freshman Orientation activities during the five days before classes begin. This policy should be communicated clearly to fraternities and sororities, singing groups, and other undergraduate organizations.
- No student parties should be scheduled or allowed during Freshman Orientation.
- The time between arrival on campus and the beginning of classes for upperclassmen should be shortened in order to help reduce or eliminate the “Camp Yale” environment and associated excesses.
- The period of Freshman Orientation, like Bulldog Days, also could be declared “alcohol free.”

Friday Classes. The reduction in Friday classes has affected the weekend social calendar for students. Faculty often prefer not to teach on Fridays (due to travel and other obligations), and students very much prefer to have their Fridays open, making it increasingly less common for classes to be scheduled on Fridays. The standard Monday-Wednesday-Friday, 50-minute per session lecture course has evolved into two 75-minute sessions on Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday, for example. Or, the Friday session that has been used for a discussion section with a teaching fellow is rescheduled for a late afternoon or evening earlier in the week. The return of significant academic activities on Fridays would encourage a weekend social calendar that begins on Friday rather than Thursday evenings. As an important corollary, it also would make more efficient use of Yale’s already strained classroom resources. The Committee recommends that the College and Provost’s Office create incentives for departments to schedule classes on Fridays.

Recommendations Concerning Student Organizations

The Committee recognizes that there is a disconnect between many undergraduate social organizations' practices and Yale College policies. Many of these organizations, such as fraternities, sororities, singing-groups, club sports programs, and varsity sports programs sponsor events that involve risky drinking. They also create an environment in which students below the legal drinking age have easy access to alcohol.

The Committee recommends a change in attitude toward many of these student organizations, especially the fraternities and sororities. Student organizations that currently have a hands-off relationship with the College (e.g., Greek-letter organizations) should be encouraged to establish formal ties with it, such as through an interfraternity (intersorority) council. Similar organizations should be established for other popular activities such as singing groups and student publications. Such councils would provide a mechanism for the dissemination of information and policies and for encouraging student opinion leaders to model healthier attitudes and behaviors. These councils could facilitate communication with the Dean's Office, UHS, Yale Police, and in some cases the Yale Athletic Department about issues such as alcohol-related policies and concerns. Councils also could serve as forums for students in similar organizations to compare the policies and practices of their groups.

Organizations that are in other ways at some distance from the Yale College culture as experienced in the residential colleges should be reconnected to it (e.g., all athletic coaches should be fellows in a residential college; faculty members should be assigned as academic advisors to athletic teams). Specifically regarding varsity sports teams and in collaboration with the Team Captain's Council, the Committee also suggests that team meetings be conducted with each varsity sports team at the beginning of the year (concurrently with their NCAA compliance meetings). These meetings should be held with a facilitator but without the coaching staff present. The meetings should provide athletes with the opportunity for frank discussion with their teammates about issues concerning alcohol, drugs, hazing, sex and other risky activities. A peer (perhaps recently graduated athlete) could help to answer questions about Yale College policies and his or her own experiences. These meetings can also act as a bonding exercise for teams to talk about their concerns.

The Committee also recommends that Yale College Executive Committee action be taken in response to reports of hazing of any kind, especially involving alcohol, by any student organization. If such instances are reported to the Executive Committee, charges should be filed against the officers of the organization, whether present or not, and the status of the organization will be called into question, whether a registered student organization or not.

Recommendations Concerning Yale/New Haven Interaction

An important aspect of alcohol policy is related to access to alcohol at community venues that surround the Yale campus. Problematic alcohol consumption results from purchases

at both on-premise and off-premise retail outlets. Issues include: ID checks (both the use of fake IDs and inadequate checks of IDs resulting in underage drinking), lack of compliance with state requirements by some merchants, and drink “specials” (discounted alcoholic beverages) that encourage excessive alcohol consumption.

Collaboration and cooperation with the community and with local businesses can decrease these problems. Recommended options include:

- stipulating in University Properties leases (to entities serving or selling alcohol) the prohibition of drink specials and including language concerning the violation of state laws and regulations related to alcohol;
- establishing a campus/community workgroup to define alcohol-related issues and to identify collaborative solutions;
- encouraging businesses to eliminate drink specials that result in excessive consumption;
- considering a Yale University identification card that includes coded information on age and that is difficult to emulate (e.g., including a hologram or microprinting);
- collaborating with other local institutions of higher education in encouraging local businesses to implement practices that decrease underage drinking and excessive alcohol consumption.

Recommendations Concerning Undergraduate Regulations

The Committee reviewed the policies concerning alcohol and social functions at 33 colleges and universities across the country. The Committee found that the policies outlined in the Undergraduate Regulations are appropriate and do not require significant revision. As noted in the introduction to this report, although the Committee recognizes that merely revising the regulations will not adequately address the problems related to excessive drinking, the Committee does recommend minor changes to two sections of Yale College’s *Undergraduate Regulations* in an effort to clarify the existing rules.

First, in the section regarding Regulations on Social Functions, the Committee recommends standardizing registration forms for use for all Yale College organized social functions to be completed by student and student organization hosts. Organized social functions are defined in the *Undergraduate Regulations* as events that “are financed, even in part, by funds administered by Yale College or any of the residential colleges” or events that “are held in general access areas such as common rooms, lounges, dining halls, courtyards, entryways of residential colleges, the Old Campus, the cultural centers, or other University buildings or common areas.”

Second, in the section regarding Regulations on Alcoholic Beverages, the Committee recommends the following:

- Allowing only beer and wine to be served to students over the age of 21 at organized social functions unless service is provided by a certified

bartender; prohibiting service of any punch or mixed drinks more than 15% alcohol by volume.

- Prohibiting grain alcohol at any social function, as mentioned above.
- Requiring that the service of alcoholic beverages cease one hour before the scheduled end of an organized social function.
- Prohibiting all alcoholic beverages, as well as kegs of beer, in freshman rooms on the Old Campus and in freshman suites in Silliman and Timothy Dwight Colleges, and prohibiting kegs in any freshmen entryway.

Evaluation

The Committee recognizes that making recommendations for policy change is only the first step in the process of altering the culture surrounding risky drinking. Although many of the recommendations can be easily implemented, others will require serious discussion before moving forward. For example, new prevention programs should be carefully developed before being initiated. It is important that new programs are based on approaches with demonstrated empirical support, and that individuals and organizations providing educational programming have been adequately trained.

In addition, the Committee recognizes that a sound alcohol policy is one that is thoroughly evaluated, and that changes are based on data. Thus, we would like to stress the critical importance of evaluating the policies and policy changes recommended by the Committee. Although we believe the recommendations are based upon sound reasoning, and they are consistent with recommendations made by the NIAAA task force, the only way to ensure effective policy is to engage in outcome evaluation. Policies long believed to be effective, even among experts in the field, have not always been demonstrated as such. For example, traditional alcohol education programs widely used on college campuses do not appear to be an effective strategy for reducing alcohol consumption or associated consequences (NIAAA, 2002).

The Committee has made recommendations designed to influence drinking behavior and its consequences at the level of the individual as well as through modification of the campus culture. The evaluation of policies must be planned at both of these levels of analysis. For individuals, one recommendation of the Committee is to develop peer-led group discussions about alcohol with student athletes and other social groups (e.g. fraternities and sororities, singing groups). Peer-led interventions in a group format are effective when peers are well trained and the meetings focus on increasing student motivation and providing students with skills necessary to manage their use of alcohol (Fromme & Corbin, 2004). The Committee has also recommended that all students transported to the University Health Service or to an emergency room due to acute intoxication be required to complete an assessment of their drinking behavior. A similar recommendation was made for students brought before the Executive Committee with alcohol-related infractions. It is important to evaluate the effect of these assessments on the subsequent behavior of these students. If brief assessment and counseling do not result in significant changes in behavior, more intensive interventions may be warranted.

Regular evaluation of these and other programs is recommended to ensure that students are being helped by existing and new policies.

At the campus level, a yearly survey on student behaviors and attitudes would provide the data necessary for assessing the effect of policy changes. In 2000, Yale participated in the Core Institute's Alcohol and Drug Survey, which is administered at campuses throughout the country. The advantage to this approach is that data for an individual campus can be compared to other universities. The disadvantage is that the survey cannot be tailored to the specific needs of the campus. In the fall of 2005, Professor Corbin in the Department of Psychology conducted a survey of alcohol-related attitudes and behaviors on the Yale campus. A random sample (N = 1440) of students, stratified by gender, residential college, and year in school was invited to participate, and about 500 students completed the survey. This survey can provide excellent data on baseline characteristics of the Yale student population prior to the implementation of new policies. The Committee encourages the University to support future surveys that will allow evaluation of changes in student attitudes and behaviors over time. As specific changes are made in policy, questionnaire items that directly assess behaviors expected to be influenced by changes in policy can be added. For example, questions about perceived level of adult supervision on Old Campus might be included to determine the effect of new policies on these perceptions and how these perceptions relate to drinking behavior among freshmen.

The examples provided do not fully capture all of the new programs that may need to be developed or all of the existing programs requiring systematic outcome evaluation. They are simply examples of the approach to evaluation that we believe should be applied broadly when implementing the recommendations of the Committee. Many universities have formulated new campus alcohol policies that appear well informed. Far fewer have evaluated the impact of new policies. We believe that Yale should take advantage of the opportunity to be a leader in demonstrating ways to reducing risky drinking on college campuses.

Executive Summary

Background

Alcohol use by Yale students is not atypical of the general college student population.

Although rates of drinking and driving by Yale students in 2000 were low (13%) relative to national samples (31%), rates of other negative alcohol-related consequences were substantial and similar to national norms. . . Data from the summer 2005 survey showed similar patterns of negative consequences.

Clinically significant alcohol problems are evident among Yale students based on past survey research. In the 2000 Yale survey, 7% of students indicated that they felt they had a problem with alcohol, and in the 2005 survey, 11% of students reported feeling like they needed alcohol or were dependent on alcohol.

In both 2000 and 2005, students were asked if they believed that the campus environment promoted alcohol use, and 83% and 87%, respectively, answered “yes” to this question.

Campus wide prevention efforts are designed to create a culture that promotes the responsible use of alcohol among students of legal age and reduce the risks of negative consequences associated with drinking by underage and legal-aged students. These policies are the centerpiece of most college and university alcohol policies and form the core of the policies recommended by this committee.

The goals of Yale’s alcohol-relevant policies are to: (a) create a culture that promotes the responsible use of alcohol among students of legal age, (b) reduce the risks of negative consequences to the individual and the overall student body associated with drinking by underage and legal-aged students, and (c) prevent drinking patterns that lead to the development of life-long alcohol problems.

The Committee’s overall conclusion from these various information-gathering activities is that drinking problems on campus are the consequence of a culture that encourages heavy alcohol consumption, a dearth of obvious alternative ways to “hang out with friends” that do not involve drinking, and a lack of an adult presence in locations and social situations in which problem drinking is common (e.g., among freshmen on the Old Campus, at fraternity parties on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings). The Committee concluded that although Yale College’s rules and regulations could be fine-tuned to some extent to reduce problems (and it makes specific recommendations along these lines), addressing these broader issues is of paramount concern. Consequently, the Committee also recommends specific approaches for addressing these other issues. The Committee also concluded that College regulations that focus on student safety as the first priority (e.g., students are not punished when they drink so excessively that they are

transported to UHS or a hospital emergency room) are praiseworthy and effective, and they should be retained.

Alcohol Education

All residential college masters and deans, YCDO personnel with decanal titles, athletic coaches, and other staff members who oversee student life should receive formal training about alcohol use and abuse, risky drinking, and relevant University policies. Training should foster the development of consensus and lead to consistency in the approaches and responses of those trained . . . The training provided to freshman counselors should be examined and augmented if necessary. . . Special educational opportunities should be developed for key opinion leaders among the student body.

Transport, Counseling, and Executive Committee Actions

The Committee reaffirms the principle that fear of punishment should not be a barrier to help-seeking in an emergency situation involving alcohol. . . We recommend, however, that all students transported [to UHS or a hospital emergency room] . . . receive alcohol counseling by a substance abuse counselor at the UHS Mental Health Clinic. . . Further, any student who comes to the attention of the Yale College Executive Committee for an alcohol-related offense or any offense occurring when the student was intoxicated . . . should receive alcohol counseling.

Reduction of Risky Alcohol Use by Freshmen

The Committee recommends the creation of five apartments carved from Old Campus spaces so that an adult (or adult couple) could be available as a resource in emergency situations, serve as advisors to the Freshman Counselors, and otherwise be involved in the lives of freshman students. Each adult couple would work with two residential colleges.

Freshmen living on Old Campus (indeed, all students) should have available to them a late night gathering place for socializing with friends on weekend evenings.

Major Campus Social Events

The Committee endorses the policies put in place by the Department of Athletics beginning with home football games in November 2005. . . Other key social events such as those surrounding Tap Nights (for singing groups, fraternities and senior societies), Fall Show, Halloween, Winter Ball, and Spring Fling should be examined to ensure that students who do not want to drink can participate fully and without stigma and that opportunities for risky drinking are minimized.

Student Activities

We encourage the Yale College Council Student Activities Committee to continue to plan weekend parties/events that encourage social activity without drinking.

The Calendar: Bulldog Days, Freshman Orientation, Friday Classes

We encourage Yale students to declare Bulldog Days “alcohol free.”

The Yale College Dean’s Office and/or the residential college masters and deans should organize all Freshman Orientation activities during the five days before classes begin.

The return of significant academic activities on Fridays would encourage a weekend social calendar that begins on Friday rather than Thursday evenings.

Student Organizations

The committee recommends a change in attitude toward many . . . student organizations, especially the fraternities and sororities. Student organizations that currently have a hands-off relationship with the College (e.g., Greek-letter organizations) should be encouraged to establish formal ties with it, such as through an interfraternity (intersorority) council. . . These councils could facilitate communication with the Dean’s Office, UHS, Yale Police, and in some cases the Yale Athletic Department about issues such as alcohol related-policies and concerns.

Yale/New Haven Interaction

An important aspect of alcohol policy is related to access to alcohol at community venues that surround the Yale campus. . . Collaboration and cooperation with the community and with local businesses can decrease these problems.

Undergraduate Regulations

The Committee reviewed the policies concerning alcohol and social functions at 33 colleges and universities across the country. The Committee found that the policies outlined in the Undergraduate Regulations are appropriate and do not require significant revisions. . . although the Committee recommends minor changes to two sections of Yale College’s *Undergraduate Regulations*.

Evaluation

. . . we would like to stress the critical importance of evaluating the policies and policy changes recommended by the Committee. Although we believe the recommendations are based upon sound reasoning, and they are consistent with

recommendations made by the NIAAA task force, the only way to ensure effective policy is to engage in outcome evaluation.

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