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# The power of philosophy, policies, programs, practices, and participation: alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students' attitudes and behaviors

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**The power of philosophy, policies, programs, practices, and participation:  
Alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students' attitudes and behaviors**

**by**

**William Russell Nelson**

**A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**Major: Education (Educational Leadership)**

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## **DEDICATION**

**This dissertation is dedicated lovingly to my mother, Dr. Beverly Dunn Nelson-Forbes, and my grandmother, Dora Mae Dunn. It was my mother's support and generosity that allowed me to pursue my Ph.D. from Iowa State University just as it was my grandmother's encouragement and support that enabled my mother to pursue her Ph.D. also from Iowa State. Thank you for being such wonderful mothers and mentors.**

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

**Alcohol abuse among college students continues to be a serious problem facing American higher education. Despite the efforts of colleges and universities to address this problem, current data reveal no significant changes in college student drinking, specifically binge/heavy episodic drinking – the consumption of five or more drinks in a row for men and four or more drinks in a row for women. The Harvard School of Public Health’s 2001 re-survey of institutions involved in the 1993, 1997, and 1999 College Alcohol Studies indicated no significant change in the overall binge drinking rate among college students from 1993 to 2001, which remained constant at approximately 44% (Wechsler et al., 2002). Wechsler et al. asserted that “the lack of change in binge drinking among college students since 1993 is notable, given the significant efforts [of colleges and universities] to combat this problem” (p. 215).**

**In an earlier study, Wechsler, Lee, Kuo, and Lee (2000) examined data from the Harvard School of Public Health 1993, 1997, and 1999 College Alcohol Studies on student binge/heavy episodic drinking. The researchers found that, of the 44% of college students who were binge/heavy episodic drinkers, 23% of these students were frequent binge/heavy episodic drinkers, and binge/heavy episodic drinkers accounted for 91% of the alcohol consumed. Equally alarming, 47% of college students identified the prospect of “getting drunk” as an important motivator for consuming alcohol. Jones, Oeltmann, Wilson, Brener, and Hill (2001) found that college student binge drinkers were significantly more likely than were non-binge drinkers to report current and lifetime uses of cigarettes, marijuana, cocaine, and other illegal substances.**

In a study released recently, Hingson, Heeren, Zakocs, Kopstein, and Wechsler (2002) found that an estimated 1,400 college students die each year from alcohol-related causes including motor vehicle accidents, and nearly 500,000 students are injured while under the influence of alcohol. Approximately 110,000 college students are arrested annually for alcohol violations such as public intoxication or operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol. Furthermore, Hingson et al. found that more than 600,000 college students are assaulted each year by other students who have been drinking, and over 70,000 students are victims of sexual assault or date rape, with alcohol contributing to these crimes.

Alcohol abuse also has an adverse effect on college students' academic performance. Wechsler (1995) found that 21% of college student binge drinkers were behind in their schoolwork and 30% had missed class due to drinking. Among frequent binge drinkers, 46% were behind in their schoolwork and over 60% had missed class due to drinking. Only six percent of non-binge drinkers were behind in their studies and only eight percent had missed class due to drinking. In another study on student alcohol consumption and academic performance, Presley, Meilman, Cashin, and Lyster (1996) found that students who consumed no more than 3.3 drinks per week were more likely to earn As; students who consumed 3.4 to 4.8 drinks per week were more likely to earn Bs; students who consumed 4.9 to 6.1 drinks per week were more likely to earn Cs; and students who consumed 6.2 to 9.0 drinks per week were more likely to earn Ds or Fs.

Fraternity and sorority members are particularly prone to alcohol abuse and other alcohol-related problems (Alva, 1998; Baer, 1994; Borsari & Carey, 1999; Cashin, Presley, & Meilman, 1998; Chaloupka & Wechsler, 1996; Danielson, Taylor, & Hartford, 2001; Lichtenfeld & Kayson, 1994; O'Connor, Cooper, & Thiel, 1996; Rabow & Duncan-Schill,

1995; Wechsler, Kuh, & Davenport, 1996; Wechsler et al., 2002). Dr. Henry Wechsler, Harvard School of Public Health professor and international research expert on alcohol abuse among college students, asserted that the strongest predictor of college student binge drinking is residence in a fraternity or sorority chapter house (Philpott, 1997). The Harvard School of Public Health 2001 College Alcohol Study revealed that 75% of fraternity and sorority house residents were binge drinkers (Wechsler et al., 2002). Binge/heavy episodic drinking and other alcohol-related problems associated with men's fraternities have resulted in numerous student deaths in recent years on college campuses including, but not limited to the University of Iowa, University of Maryland, University of New Hampshire, University of North Carolina, Alfred University, Louisiana State University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Old Dominion University, and San Diego State University.

In their review of the research literature on alcohol-related problems associated with fraternities and sororities, Danielson et al. (2001) discovered several common themes. Fraternity members drank more frequently and more heavily than did non-members and fraternity members were more likely than were non-members to drink to "get drunk." Students who drank more frequently and more heavily in high school and who experienced more negative consequences from their drinking were more likely to join a fraternity or sorority. Furthermore, Danielson et al. found that the culture of fraternities and their socialization processes were alcohol-centric, particularly during the pledge/new member period.

For the aforementioned reasons, many college and university presidents have identified student alcohol abuse as one of their critical problems. The Higher Education

Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention [HEC] (1997) expressed the concerns of college and university presidents about the problem of alcohol abuse among college students:

Student binge drinking and the many problems that arise from it are among the most serious threats faced by our nation's institutions of higher education.

Many of the things we [presidents] worry about – student death and injury, weak academic performance, property damage and vandalism, strained town-gown relations, negative publicity – are linked to student alcohol abuse. (p. 4)

Since the mid-1990s, presidential involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives has increased as a result of several high-profile college student alcohol-related deaths and several national studies on college student drinking. In recognition and support of this increased presidential involvement, The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1997) formed the Presidents Leadership Group. The Presidents Leadership Group was established to develop an overall blueprint and specific recommendations for involving presidents in effective alcohol and other drug prevention on college campuses. One of its recommendations relates directly to the research focus of this study: "College presidents should work to ensure that all elements of the college community avoid providing 'mixed messages' that might encourage alcohol and other drug use" (p. 12).

Whereas the emergence of presidential leadership and involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives has been relatively recent, higher education institutions have been engaged in a number of these programs and initiatives for many years. Early, more traditional campus-based alcohol education and abuse prevention programs, which focused on changing the characteristics of individual students, have had

limited positive effects on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol (Ametrano, 1992; Wechsler, Davenport, Dowdall, Moeykens, & Castillo, 1994; Walters, 2000; Wechsler, Kelley, Weitzman, San Giovanni, & Seibring, 2000). More recent alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives, like social normative marketing, are having greater positive effects on binge/heavy episodic drinking among college students by correcting students' misperceptions of their peers' alcohol consumption patterns (Agostinelli, Brown, & Miller, 1995; Baer & Carney, 1993; Baer, Stacy, & Larimer, 1991; Barnett, Far, Mauss, & Miller, 1996; DeJong & Linkenbach, 1999; Haines, 1996; Haines & Spear, 1996; Meilman, Presley, & Cashin, 1997; Perkins, 1997; Perkins & Berkowitz, 1986; Perkins, Meilman, Leichter, Cashin, & Presley, 1999; Perkins & Wechsler, 1996; Zimmerman, 1997).

Other recent initiatives, like environmental management, are also having a greater positive impact by altering the physical, social, economic, and legal environmental conditions that contribute to binge/heavy episodic drinking among college students (DeJong & Davidson, 2000; DeJong et al., 1998; Epstein, 1995; Gebhardt, Kaphingst, & DeJong, 2000; Johannessen, Glider, Collins, Hueston, & DeJong, 2001). Increased student and faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives and parental notification of student alcohol violations also have been cited as strategies to reduce alcohol abuse among college students. Yet, all of these efforts have yielded only moderately positive results.

With the research suggesting that these alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives are having only a moderately positive impact on the problem of alcohol abuse among college students, can more be done to combat this serious problem? Can higher education institutions have a greater positive impact on the alcohol abuse problem among

college students by identifying elements of the college community that contribute to mixed messages about alcohol, as recommended by The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1997) Presidents Leadership Group? Can higher education institutions then develop strategies to mitigate these elements? Can higher education institutions have a greater positive impact on the alcohol abuse problem among college students by enhancing both the congruence of their philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and the congruence among institutional officials and students in their understanding and application of them? Does alcohol-related institutional congruence and student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development have an effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol?

This study on the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol addresses these questions.

### **Problem Statement**

Given the magnitude of the problem of alcohol abuse among college students and its impact on American higher education, college and universities have implemented a number of alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives over the years. Early, more traditional campus-based alcohol education and abuse prevention programs have had limited positive effects on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. More recent programs and initiatives like social normative marketing, environmental management, increased student and faculty involvement, and parental notification have been more effective. Unfortunately, these efforts have yielded only moderately positive results in reducing the problem of alcohol abuse among college students.

Further research is needed to develop additional strategies to reduce alcohol abuse among college students. Is it possible that higher education institutions may be contributing to the problem of alcohol abuse among college students by sending them mixed messages about alcohol? Can higher education institutions identify elements of the college community that contribute to these mixed messages and then develop strategies to mitigate these elements? Can higher education institutions have a greater positive impact on the problem of alcohol abuse among college students by enhancing their alcohol-related institutional congruence? Does alcohol-related institutional congruence and student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development have an effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol? This study examines these questions.

### **Purpose of Study**

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. For the purposes of this study, alcohol-related institutional congruence is defined as the co-congruence among the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and among administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and application of the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol. A secondary purpose was to examine the relationship between student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

### **Research Focus and Questions**

The focus of this research was to develop a greater understanding and general assessment of the research participants' perceptions and constructions of alcohol-related



**institutional congruence. In addition, this research was undertaken to better understand the participants' perceptions and constructions of the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, and the relationship between student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**

**With this research focus in mind, three overarching research questions were developed:**

- 1. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding alcohol-related congruence – the co-congruence among the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and among administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and application of the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol?**
- 2. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding the effect of alcohol-related institutional congruence on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol?**
- 3. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding the effect of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol?**

### **Basic Research Assumptions**

Three basic research assumptions about alcohol-related institutional congruence underpinned this study:

1. Alcohol-related institutional congruence presumably is more desirable than alcohol-related institutional incongruence.
2. There are conditions and situations, however, when moderate alcohol-related institutional incongruence is appropriate and desirable.
3. Moderate alcohol-related institutional incongruence is appropriate and desirable only if it is framed in the context of the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and/or practices related to alcohol.

An example follows to assist readers in understanding these assumptions. Whereas alcohol-related institutional congruence presumably is more desirable than incongruence, consider the role of a first responder (e.g., a residence hall director) to a student's alcohol poisoning in a residence hall. The primary goal of the residence hall director is to initiate the crisis response so the student receives immediate medical attention; the goal at that time should not be to inform the student of the university's philosophy or policies related to alcohol or to challenge the student on the behavior. However, after the student recovers and at the appropriate time, the residence hall director must confront the student and articulate that the behavior was contrary to the university's philosophy and policies related to alcohol and that the student will face consequences associated with the behavior.

Another example that illustrates these assumptions is a situation when a campus safety officer responds to a life-threatening campus emergency or a situation when a health center nurse or physician attends to a medical emergency. Regardless of which situation,

there must be a follow-up intervention from the university official who responded or attended directly to the student in which the appropriate philosophy and policies related to alcohol are communicated to the student. This will reinforce why the behavior was contrary to the university's philosophy and policies related to alcohol and why the student will face consequences associated with the behavior. The importance here is that the university official who was actually involved does one of the interventions so the student has to face the person who, perhaps in some cases, saved his/her life.

### **Significance of Study**

The problems associated with alcohol abuse among college students pose serious threats to students' health, education, and welfare on American college campuses today (Hingson et al., 2002; Wechsler et al., 2002). Given the seriousness of these problems, it is critical that higher education institutions identify elements of the college community that contribute to student alcohol abuse and then develop strategies to mitigate these elements. Higher education institutions cannot afford to contribute to student alcohol abuse by sending students mixed, incongruent messages about alcohol. Thus, this study provides meaningful considerations and a potential research prototype for college and university officials who are committed to enhancing alcohol-related institutional congruence in an effort to reduce alcohol abuse among their students.

### **Limitations of Study**

This study examined the perceptions and constructions of research participants from only one higher education institution. This study makes no claim that the results and conclusions are guaranteed to be representative of or transferable to all higher education institutions. More specifically, because the research site was a large, state-assisted

**Midwestern Doctoral/Research University – Extensive institution (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2000 Ed.), no claim is made that the results and conclusions are guaranteed to be representative of or transferable to other large, state-assisted Doctoral/Research University – Extensive institutions. Furthermore, because the research site was located in the Midwest, regional differences could affect the transferability of the study's results and conclusions to higher education institutions located in other areas of the country. Any generalizations from this study, as they might apply to the larger population of higher education institutions, should be made carefully.**

**This study was based on the perceptions and constructions of 33 research participants. The majority of participants for this study were selected based on their direct involvement in or close association with the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. A different participant sample for this study could have produced different results, which, in turn, would have led to different conclusions.**

**This study examined both the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol and the relationship between student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. The study did not attempt to determine the statistical significance of these relationships. Determining the statistical significance between alcohol-related institutional congruence and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol and between student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol would be a natural follow-up study utilizing quantitative research methods.**

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined to assist readers in understanding the potentially complex and interconnected terms and phrases used in this study:

- ***Alcohol Culture*** – How things are done and what things are like related to alcohol at the research site. The alcohol culture, for the purposes of this research, is the intersection of the university’s philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol with the students’ attitudes, behaviors, norms, traditions, and customs related to alcohol.
- ***Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruence*** – The co-congruence among the university’s philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and among administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and application of the university’s philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol.
- ***Alcohol Task Force*** – The research site’s university-wide alcohol committee. “The mission of [the university] Alcohol Task Force is to address alcohol issues with [the university] students. The Task Force will focus on programming, evaluating policies, promoting healthy choices, and educating students and the University community. *Taken from the minutes of the 06/23/99 Alcohol Task Force meeting.*”
- ***Binge/Heavy Episodic Drinking*** – The consumption of five or more drinks in a row for men and four or more drinks in a row for women (Wechsler & Austin, 1998; Wechsler, Dowdall, Maenner, Gledhill-Hoyt, & Lee, 1998; Wechsler, Lee, et al., 2000). Due to objections of the term “binge” in this context, the Panel on the Prevention and Treatment of College Alcohol Problems for the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism denounced the use of the term by unanimous vote. Since the mid-1990s, the term “heavy episodic” has become an alternative term.

- ***Boost Alcohol Consciousness Concerning the Health of University Students (BACCHUS)***  
– A national student/peer alcohol education and abuse prevention network.
- ***Chapter*** – The collegiate group of an inter/national fraternity or sorority.
- ***Core Alcohol and Drug Survey*** – “First developed in 1989 by a committee of grantees from the Drug Prevention Program in Higher Education of the U.S. Department of Education, the survey...examines the use and consequences of alcohol and other drugs in the collegiate setting” (Meilman et al., 1997, p. 201). An expanded, long form of the Core Survey became available in 1994, which included a broader array of questions (e.g., perceptions of alcohol use and risks associated with use and campus alcohol culture and norms, as well as beliefs on the effects of alcohol and secondary binge effects, campus violence, sexuality, and participation in campus activities).
- ***Core Institute*** – Based at Southern Illinois University – Carbondale located in Carbondale, IL, the Core Institute is a not-for-profit organization whose primary purpose is to assist colleges and universities in their alcohol and drug prevention efforts.
- ***Curriculum Infusion*** – An alcohol education and abuse prevention strategy based on integrating alcohol prevention material into an existing academic course (Wadsworth, Hoeppe, & Hassell, 1994).
- ***Department of Residence Life Alcohol Policy*** – “Cereal malt beverages and alcoholic liquor may not be brought into or consumed in educational buildings or in university student housing facilities. This regulation pertains to any person, regardless of age, student status, or position within or outside of the university setting. To avoid any possible misunderstanding, no alcoholic beverage containers of any type are allowed in university housing facilities. Discovery of an alcoholic beverage container will require

immediate discarding of the container and contents, if any, in the presence of a staff member. Empty containers that have been physically altered to serve solely decorative purposes are permitted with prior approval of the [residence life professional staff member].” *Taken from the Department of Residence Life Student Handbook, 2001-2002.*

- ***Environmental Management*** – Alcohol and other drug (AOD) intervention initiatives designed “to change the physical, social, economic, and legal environment that affects AOD use, which in turn can be influenced through a combination of institutional, community, and public policy change” (DeJong et al., 1998, p. 4).
- ***Fraternity*** – A Greek-letter society for men. Some sororities are women’s fraternities.
- ***Greek*** – A student who is a member of a social fraternity or sorority.
- ***Greeks Advocating the Mature Management of Alcohol (GAMMA)*** – A subsidiary of BACCHUS, GAMMA is a national student/peer alcohol education and abuse prevention network specifically for fraternity and sorority communities.
- ***The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (HEC)*** – Created by the U.S. Department of Education in 1993 and located in Newton, MA, the Higher Education Center is the “nation’s primary resource for assisting colleges and universities as they develop, implement, and evaluate programs and policies for alcohol and other drug prevention....A central feature of the Higher Education Center’s work is the promotion of multiple prevention strategies that can affect the campus and community environment as a whole and thereby have a large-scale impact on the entire student body” (HEC, 1997, p. 2).
- ***Mascot Nights*** – A pseudonym for the research site’s late-night, alcohol-free social program designed as an on-campus alternative for students.

- ***National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)*** – The NIAAA sponsors and conducts research on the causes, consequences, treatment, and prevention of alcohol abuse, alcoholism, and other alcohol-related problems. Based in Bethesda, MD, the NIAAA is one of 19 affiliates with the National Institutes of Health, the principal federal agency for biomedical research (NIAAA, 2002).
- ***Peer Norms Correction (PNC)*** – A procedure used to present individuals with the actual drinking norms and behaviors of their peers (Peeler, Far, Miller, & Brigham, 2000).
- ***Philosophy (related to alcohol)*** – The university’s overarching philosophy related to alcohol as understood, integrated, and applied by the research site’s administrators, faculty, and students. The philosophy is the collection and intersection of the personal, interpersonal, organizational, social, commercial, and political dimensions of alcohol.
- ***Pledge/New Member*** – A member of a fraternity or sorority who is in his/her first year of membership and who has not been initiated.
- ***Pluralistic Ignorance*** – A theoretical concept derived from the notion that “the majority of students believe that their peers are uniformly more comfortable with campus alcohol practices than they are” (Schroeder & Prentice, 1998, p. 2150).
- ***Policies (related to alcohol)*** – The university’s policies related to alcohol as understood, integrated, and applied by the research site’s administrators, faculty, and students. University-wide alcohol-related policies that apply to university property/facilities, administrators, faculty, students/student organizations, alumni, parents, and guests. Alcohol-related policies that apply to specific university departments such as residence life and the student union. Students may be involved in the development of these



policies, but they are not policies developed exclusively by or for students or student organizations.

- ***Practices (related to alcohol)*** – University officials’ practices related to alcohol as understood, integrated, and applied by the research site’s administrators, faculty, and students. Decisions, behaviors, customs, and other “ways of doing things” promoted or practiced by university officials that may or may not be congruent with the university’s philosophy, policies, and programs related to alcohol.
- ***Programs (related to alcohol)*** – The university’s programs, initiatives, or committees related to alcohol as understood, integrated, and applied by the research site’s administrators, faculty, and students. Alcohol-related social or educational programs or initiatives sponsored for or by university officials and departments and/or students and student organizations. Collaborative alcohol-related programs and initiatives inclusive of administrators, faculty, students, and community members. Any standing or ad hoc university committee or task force that addresses alcohol-related issues.
- ***Secondary Binge Effects*** – Problems experienced by one student due to another student’s alcohol consumption (e.g., being insulted or humiliated; getting into an argument or quarrel; being pushed, hit, or assaulted; having property damaged; having to care for someone who is intoxicated; having study or sleep interrupted; experiencing an unwanted sexual advance; being sexually assaulted or date raped) (Wechsler et al., 1994).
- ***Social Normative Marketing*** – Alcohol abuse prevention strategies that utilize “distinctive techniques to bolster the effectiveness of conventional health education and prevention programs....Its strategies can popularize positive ideas and attitudes and

encourage favorable changes in social values and individual behavior” (Zimmerman, 1997, p. 5).

- ***Sorority*** – A Greek-letter society for women. Some sororities are women’s fraternities.
- ***Student Participation*** – The level and extent of student involvement and engagement in alcohol-related policy and program development. Student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development relates to 1) the degree to which students actively engage themselves and value their own involvement, and 2) the degree to which university officials actively encourage and genuinely value student involvement.
- ***Student Policies (related to alcohol)*** – Alcohol-related policies and procedures that apply to students and/or student organizations that are developed and administered exclusively by and for students.
- ***Student Programs (related to alcohol)*** – Alcohol-related social or educational programs, initiatives, or organizations that apply to students and/or student organizations that are designed and implemented exclusively by and for students.

### **Chapter Summary**

Chapter One established the need for this study of the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students’ attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. This study’s research focus and questions and its basic research assumptions and terms were outlined. Chapter One also explained the significance and limitations of this study.

Chapter Two will explore the research literature on the problem of alcohol abuse among college students in general and college fraternities in particular, the roles and responses of college and university presidents in relation to this problem, and alcohol

education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives to combat this problem. In addition, Chapter Two will discuss a study by Kuh, Schuh, and Whitt (1991) and their book, Involving Colleges, along with one of its conclusions in the context of college students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter provides an overview of the research literature and other scholarly works on the problem of alcohol abuse among college students and the impact of this problem on American higher education. The chapter is presented in five major sections: 1) Alcohol Abuse and the College Student; 2) Alcohol Abuse and the College Fraternity; 3) Student Alcohol Abuse and Presidential Leadership; 4) Alcohol Education and Abuse Prevention Programs and Initiatives; and 5) Institutional Congruence and Student Behavior: An Involving Colleges Conclusion.

The fifth major section of this chapter, Institutional Congruence and Student Behavior: An Involving Colleges Conclusion, discusses a study by Kuh et al. (1991) and their book, Involving Colleges, and its conclusion on the effect of clear, consistent institutional messages on students' attitudes and behaviors. Specifically, the application of that conclusion is discussed in the context of clear, congruent institutional philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

### **Alcohol Abuse and the College Student**

Alcohol abuse among college students is having a profound impact on American higher education. The Commission on Substance Abuse at Colleges and Universities reported that "alcohol is involved in 80 percent of campus vandalism, 90 percent of campus rapes, and 95 percent of violent crime on campus" (as cited in Levine & Cureton, 1998, p. 106). Douglas et al. (1997) found that over one-third (34%) of college students surveyed reported consuming five or more alcoholic beverages in one sitting on at least one occasion in the past 30 days. Wechsler, Lee, et al. (2000) found that 44% of the college students

surveyed engaged in binge/heavy episodic drinking and 23% of those students engaged in frequent binge/heavy episodic drinking at least once in the two-week period preceding the survey. Equally alarming, nearly one-half (47%) of the students surveyed by Wechsler, Lee, et al. indicated that an important motivator for consuming alcohol was the prospect of “getting drunk.” Jones et al. (2001) found that students who binge drink were “significantly more likely than their non-binge-drinking peers to report lifetime and current use of cigarettes, marijuana, cocaine, and other illegal substances” (p. 37).

Wechsler and Austin (1998) and Wechsler et al. (1998) defined binge drinking as the consumption of five or more drinks in a row for men and four or more drinks in a row for women. Due to objections to the term “binge” in this context, the Panel on the Prevention and Treatment of College Alcohol Problems for the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, by unanimous vote, denounced the use of the term. In the mid-1990s, the term “heavy episodic” became an alternative term. Binge/heavy episodic drinking and its definition among college students have been and continue to be topics of much research.

Wechsler’s commitment to research and writing on binge/heavy episodic drinking among college students has made a significant contribution to the literature on alcohol education and abuse prevention. In conjunction with the Harvard School of Public Health, Wechsler et al. (1994) examined the 1993 College Alcohol Study survey data on alcohol consumption and binge drinking patterns of nearly 18,000 college students and the problems associated with binge drinking. Forty-four percent of the students who responded to the survey were classified as binge drinkers, and 19% were classified as frequent binge drinkers, with most students reporting the same drinking patterns in high school and college. Although most of the binge and frequent binge drinkers did not cite their own alcohol

consumption patterns as problematic, nearly one-half (47%) of them experienced five or more problems from drinking (e.g., being hungover, regretting something they did, forgetting where they were and/or what they did, missing class and/or falling behind academically, arguing/fighting with friends, getting hurt/injured, damaging property, engaging in unplanned and/or unprotected sex, getting into trouble with police, and overdosing resulting in medical treatment). Additionally, students considered to be non-binge drinkers who attended institutions with high binge drinking rates were at greater risks of experiencing the secondary effects of binge drinking than those who did not attend institutions with high binge drinking rates.

Scrive (1998) also cited some alarming statistics from the Harvard School of Public Health 1993 College Alcohol Study: 1) 50% of all college men and 39% of all college women were binge drinkers; 2) 86% of fraternity house residents and 80% of sorority house residents were binge drinkers; 3) 61% of college men and 50% of college women involved in intercollegiate athletics were binge drinkers; 4) 48% of Euro-American students, 38% of Hispanic students, 34% of Native American students, 21% of Asians, and 16% of African-American students were binge drinkers; 5) 50% of college binge drinkers were binge drinkers in high school; and 6) Binge drinking was more prevalent in colleges in the Northeast and North Central than other regions of the country.

Wechsler, Molnar, Davenport, and Baer (1999) also analyzed data from Harvard's 1993 College Alcohol Study to examine the weekly alcohol consumption patterns of college students. When analyzing consumption patterns by combining the three classifications to which students were assigned (non-binge, infrequent binge, and frequent binge drinkers), the mean number of drinks consumed per week was 5.1 and the median number of drinks was

1.5. When isolating students by classification, the median number of drinks consumed per week was 0.7 for non-binge drinkers, 3.7 for infrequent binge drinkers, and 14.5 for frequent binge drinkers. Consumption patterns varied significantly by institution, from 1% of the students meeting or exceeding the “binge” criteria at the lowest binge drinking rate institution to 70% of the students meeting or exceeding the criteria at the highest binge drinking rate institution. Although binge drinkers and frequent binge drinkers constituted only 44% of the population studied, they accounted for 91% of the alcohol consumed. Non-binge drinkers (56%) only accounted for 9% of the alcohol consumed.

Wechsler, Moeykens, Davenport, Castillo, and Hansen (1995) also analyzed data from the 1993 College Alcohol Study to examine the impact of college student drinking on other students, specifically, the degree to which binge/heavy episodic drinking among college students adversely affects non-binge/non-heavy episodic drinkers. Their analysis revealed that 66% of all students reported experiencing at least one adverse consequence (or secondary binge effect) from other students’ heavy drinking. Examples of these secondary binge effects included: being insulted or humiliated; getting into an argument or quarrel; being pushed, hit, or assaulted; having property damaged; having to care for someone who is intoxicated; having study or sleep interrupted; experiencing an unwanted sexual advance; being sexually assaulted or date raped. When comparing non-heavy drinkers at high drinking level schools to non-heavy drinkers at low drinking level schools, the odds of experiencing at least one secondary binge effect was 3.6 to 1. Living on campus at high drinking level schools adversely affected students who were non-binge/non-heavy episodic drinkers.

Page, Scanlan, and Gilbert (1999) studied binge drinking among college students by investigating the relationship between students’ estimations of binge drinking and students’

self-reported participation in binge drinking during an average week. The researchers found that students' estimations of their peers' binge drinking exceeded their peers' self-reports of binge drinking. Students estimated that approximately two-thirds (65.5%) of their male peers and over one-half (54.8%) of their female peers were binge drinkers, when only 49.5% of male students and 28.1% of female students were self-reported binge drinkers. Self-reported binge drinkers estimated significantly higher binge drinking rates among their peers than self-reported non-binge drinkers did. In addition, this study proved that one's tendency to binge drink was positively correlated with one's estimations of binge drinking on campus, and that binge drinkers were at substantial risk to engage in other substance use behaviors.

A similar study by Meilman et al. (1997) examined the average weekly alcohol consumption of college students using data from the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey (long form) administered between October 1994 and June 1996. Interestingly, their findings, more specifically their interpretation of the findings, differed significantly from Wechsler et al. (1999); Meilman et al. found that the majority of students used little or no alcohol. Approximately 59% of students at two-year institutions and 51% of students at four-year institutions drank zero to one drink per week. Only 10% of the students reported consuming 15 or more drinks on average per week. Meilman et al. asserted that this data, which supported that more than 50% of college students do not drink or drink one drink on average per week, could have a positive impact on students if used to challenge their perceptions of their peers' normative alcohol consumption.

A modified version of the Core Survey was used by Clapp and McDonnell (2000) in their study of 403 randomly selected college students' alcohol consumption patterns and related problems. Path analyses were used to examine two patterns of alcohol consumption –



30-day use and heavy episodic drinking – and the relationship among: 1) gender, age, perceived normative alcohol use, perceived extent of alcohol promotion, and influence of prevention advertisements; 2) 30-day use or heavy episodic drinking; and 3) 30-day problems. The study revealed a positive pathway for both consumption patterns between alcohol use and alcohol-related problems. An interesting difference from other research, however, Clapp and McDonnell found that students' perceptions of their peers' alcohol consumption patterns were fairly accurate. In addition, they found that men reported drinking more than women, younger students drank more than older students, students who overestimated their peers' consumption patterns drank more, and students who reported being influenced by prevention advertisements experienced fewer alcohol-related problems. The results suggested students' perceptions of their social and physical environments are important predictors of drinking and drinking-related problems.

Wechsler (1995) analyzed the effects of binge drinking on students' academic performance by using the Harvard School of Public Health 1993 College Alcohol Study survey data. The data revealed that 21% of the students classified as binge drinkers were behind in their schoolwork, and 30% of the students classified as binge drinkers had missed class due to drinking since the beginning of the academic year. Of the students classified as "frequent" binge drinkers – students who had binged three or more times during the past two weeks – 46% were behind in their schoolwork and over 60% had missed class due to drinking. Only 6% of non-binge drinkers were behind in their studies and only 8% had missed class due to drinking.

In conjunction with the Core Institute at Southern Illinois University – Carbondale, Presley et al. (1996) also found a correlation between student alcohol consumption and

academic performance, specifically grade point average. The data indicated that students who consumed 3.3 or less drinks per week were more likely to earn As; students who consumed 3.4 to 4.8 drinks per week were more likely to earn Bs; students who consumed 4.9 to 6.1 drinks per week were more likely to earn Cs; and students who consumed 6.2 to 9.0 drinks per week were more likely to earn Ds or Fs.

In 1997, the Harvard School of Public Health re-surveyed 130 of the 140 institutions that participated in the 1993 College Alcohol Study to determine whether any changes had occurred in college student binge drinking rates and related problems over the four-year period. Wechsler et al. (1998) found little change in the binge drinking rates, a slight decrease (from 44.1% in '93 to 42.7% in '97) in binge drinkers and slight increases in non-drinkers (from 15.6% in '93 to 19.0% in '97) and frequent binge drinkers (from 19.5% in '93 to 20.7% in '97). Of the 116 institutions included in the final analysis, binge drinking rates decreased at 64 colleges, increased at 44 colleges, and remained constant at 8. The binge drinking rate decreased between 1% and 6% for all student subgroups, except for the African American (+10%) and Asian/Pacific Islander (+12%) subgroups. Remaining constant between survey years, "students who were male, White, aged 23 years or younger, never married, belonged to fraternities or sororities, lived in fraternity or sorority houses, and binged in high school continued to have higher binge drinking rates than their respective counterparts" (p. 62). Increases were reported in each of the 12 educational, interpersonal, health, and safety problems from 1993 to 1997, and the frequency of secondhand binge effects remained relatively constant.

Wechsler, Lee, et al. (2000) analyzed data from the 1999 re-survey of institutions that had participated in the 1993 and 1997 Harvard School of Public Health alcohol studies by

comparing the 1999 data, generated from over 14,000 students from 119 four-year institutions, with the data from 1993 and 1997. They found that the percentage of students considered binge drinkers in the 1999 study (44%) had not changed since the 1993 study. Interestingly, both abstention rates and frequent binge drinking rates rose dramatically from 1993 to 1999, with 19% of students abstaining from alcohol and 23% of students considered “frequent” binge drinkers. Two additional findings remained relatively constant throughout the studies: 1) students classified as binge drinkers, especially those considered “frequent” binge drinkers, were more likely than non-binge drinkers to experience alcohol-related problems; and 2) students classified as non-binge drinkers, who attended institutions with high binge drinking rates, were at greater risk of experiencing the secondary effects of binge drinking.

Wechsler and Kuo (2000) also analyzed data from the 1999 re-survey of institutions from 1993 and 1997 studies to determine students’ definition of binge drinking, perceptions of the prevalence of binge drinking, and estimates of binge drinking compared to their self-reports of binge drinking. The findings indicated that students’ definition of binge drinking varied directly with their own alcohol consumption patterns (i.e., the greater the consumption of alcohol by the student, the greater the number of drinks used to define binge drinking). The median student definition of binge drinking increased by one drink from the standard definition derived from previous studies; from five to six drinks in a row for men and from four to five drinks in a row for women. Of particular interest, and in contrast to Wechsler’s earlier research that follows in this literature review, the median estimate revealed slightly over one-third (35%) of all students at their institution binge drank and nearly one-half (47%) of the students underestimated the rate at which students at their institution binge drank.

Jones et al. (2001) examined the relationship between binge drinking and other substance use among college students by analyzing data from the 1995 National College Health Risk Behavior Survey (NCHRBS). The NCHRBS data represented college students age 18 years or older who attended two- and four-year public and private institutions. The data revealed that current binge drinkers were significantly more likely than non-binge drinkers to have used or be currently using legal (e.g., cigarettes) and illegal (e.g., marijuana and cocaine) substances. The data also indicated that the frequency of college student binge drinking correlated positively with the frequency of students having “ever” used cigarettes, marijuana, cocaine, and other illegal drugs, and correlated positively with current use of cigarettes and marijuana. The results of the study suggested that alcohol abuse prevention programs should reflect that many students use more than one substance and the more students binge drink, the more likely they are to use other substances. Furthermore, alcohol use reduction programs aimed at college students should incorporate information about other substance use.

In a recent study by Wechsler et al. (2002), the Harvard School of Public Health’s 2001 re-survey of the 119 institutions involved in the 1993, 1997, and 1999 College Alcohol Studies revealed no significant change in the overall binge drinking rate among college students from 1993 to 2001, remaining constant at approximately 44%. The findings indicated slight increases in the binge drinking rates at 62 institutions, but the increases were statistically significant only at five institutions; there were slight decreases in binge drinking at 57 institutions, but statistically significant only at five. There were significant increases in the percentage of abstainers (non-drinkers) and the percentage of frequent binge drinkers. Significant increases also were noted in the frequent binge drinking rates at all-women’s

colleges. Wechsler et al. found positive indicators in three areas: 1) an increase in students asking other students to limit or stop their drinking; 2) an increase in student support for tougher institutional alcohol policies; and 3) a decrease in binge drinking among fraternity and sorority house residents. Despite these limited positive results, Wechsler et al. concluded that “the lack of change in binge drinking among college students since 1993 is notable, given the significant efforts [of colleges and universities] to combat this problem” (p. 215).

In another study released recently, Hingson et al. (2002) found that an estimated 1,400 college students die each year from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including those sustained in motor vehicle accidents, and nearly 500,000 students are injured unintentionally while under the influence of alcohol. This study revealed that approximately 110,000 college students are arrested annually for alcohol violations such as public intoxication or operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol. Furthermore, Hingson et al. found that more than 600,000 college students are hit or assaulted each year by other students who have been drinking, and over 70,000 students are victims of sexual assault or date rape, with alcohol contributing to the crimes.

The relationship between alcohol policies and other characteristics of higher education institutions and students’ alcohol consumption patterns has been researched to determine if certain institutional characteristics are predictors of student alcohol use and related problems (Bormann & Stone, 2001; Chaloupka & Wechsler, 1996; Cohen & Rogers, 1997; Wechsler, Lee, Gledhill-Hoyt, & Nelson, 2001). Wechsler et al. (2001) examined college students’ alcohol consumption patterns and related problems by comparing data from students attending institutions that ban alcohol on campus to data from students attending “non-ban” institutions. The data revealed that students attending institutions that ban alcohol

on campus were 30% less likely to engage in heavy episodic drinking, regardless of their alcohol consumption patterns in high school, and were more likely not to consume alcohol at all. However, among students who were drinkers, those attending institutions that ban alcohol were equally likely as those attending “non-ban” institutions to engage in extreme drinking and to experience alcohol-related problems. Students attending institutions that ban alcohol on campus were less likely to experience the secondhand effects of others’ drinking. Wechsler et al. concluded that “a campus ban on alcohol may help those [students] who were not heavy episodic drinkers in high school continue to be non-heavy episodic drinkers in college and to help former heavy episodic drinkers in high school discontinue this behavior” (p. 140).

Bormann and Stone (2001) studied the effects of an institutional alcohol policy change on students’ alcohol consumption patterns and related problems, specifically the effects of banning alcohol sales at the University of Colorado football stadium, Folsom Field. Bormann and Stone analyzed survey data on the effects of the policy change on game-day security incidents and on the attitudes of students and season tickets holders about the policy change two years after the policy was enacted. The data revealed significant decreases in arrests (45%), ejections from the stadium (50%), student judicial referrals (89%), and assaults (90%). Although the data indicated a sizable number of students and some season ticket holders were dissatisfied with the policy change and alcohol ban, both were likely to renew their tickets regardless of their dissatisfaction. It should be noted that initially the alcohol ban was planned as a two-year experiment, and the ban did not extend to the high-priced alumni and friends skyboxes. After the two-year experimental period, the alcohol ban

was continued despite initial opposition from some members of the University of Colorado Board of Regents.

Cohen and Rogers (1997) studied the radical change in alcohol policy enforcement and sanctions for alcohol policy violators at the University of Rhode Island. Following a sexual assault incident linked to alcohol abuse, a new alcohol policy was implemented to “take a strong stand on alcohol violations which would be consistently and uniformly enforced, resulting in harm reduction and a change in the campus drinking climate” (p. 71). Implemented over an eight-semester period, the new policy replaced a less consistent method of addressing violations by having staff members document incidents, followed by an investigation and possible sanctions. The new policy involved stronger penalties for underage possession or consumption and for “of-age” public consumption, with equally strong penalties for individuals and/or organizations providing alcohol to minors. The results of the study indicated that the changes in policy enforcement and sanctions led to an overwhelming increase in violations addressed (257%) and a significant decrease in large parties, complex/serious violations, and repeat violators. The uniform and consistent enforcement of “simple” violations resulted in the significant decrease in complex/serious violations, and the new sanctioning system of fining led to the decrease in repeat violations.

Using data from the Harvard School of Public Health 1993 College Alcohol Study, Chaloupka and Wechsler (1996) examined the effects of alcohol prices, availability, and control policies on college students’ alcohol consumption patterns, specifically the effects on students’ binge/heavy episodic drinking. The results indicated that men and women were affected differently. Men were found to be relatively insensitive to price, but their drinking and binge drinking patterns were affected greatly by strong drunk driving policies. Underage

women drinkers and women binge drinkers were particularly sensitive to price, but strong drunk driving policies had little effect on women binge drinkers. The results also indicated that tighter restrictions on alcohol availability are likely to lead to a significant reduction in binge/heavy episodic drinking among college students. This study also confirmed other research that fraternity and sorority membership, on-campus living, and availability of alcohol are important predictors of college students' alcohol consumption patterns and binge/heavy episodic drinking.

Research also has focused on the relationship between students' personal characteristics and their alcohol consumption patterns to determine if certain student characteristics are predictive of alcohol use and related problems (Glindemann, Geller, & Fortney, 1999; Harford & Muthen, 2001; Knee & Neighbors, 2002). Glindemann et al. (1999) studied the relationship between students' self-esteem and their level of intoxication, hypothesizing that students with lower self-esteem drink to greater levels of intoxication than do students with higher self-esteem. The students, who previously had completed a self-esteem inventory, were measured for intoxication with a breathalyzer and were asked to complete a questionnaire as they exited a party. Although both the men and women studied supported the hypothesis, women with low self-esteem drank to greater levels of intoxication than did men with low self-esteem. In addition, women with high self-esteem drank to lesser levels of intoxication than men with high self-esteem.

Harford and Muthen (2001) studied students' prior problem behavior and change of residence in relation to their alcohol consumption patterns. Data were analyzed from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, specifically the total number of drinking days in the past week and the average number of drinking days. Harford and Muthen found that when



compared with students living at home (with parents), students living in residence halls and in their own dwellings reported significantly greater alcohol consumption patterns. When compared with students living at home, students living in their own dwellings had more prior conduct problems. Students with more prior problems in high school were more likely to live in their own dwellings, versus at home or in the residence halls. There also was a significant and positive relationship between students' change of residence and alcohol use. These findings support extending on-campus alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives to students living off-campus (not with parents).

Students' motivational orientations, extrinsic reasons for consuming alcohol, and perceptions of peer pressure were examined by Knee and Neighbors (2002) to determine the extent to which these personal characteristics predicted college students' alcohol consumption patterns. The researchers found that all three personal characteristics were positively correlated with students' alcohol consumption patterns. Specifically, motivational orientation predicted extrinsic reasons for consuming alcohol, which predicted perceptions of peer pressures, which then predicted alcohol consumption. Additionally, the correlation between perceptions of peer pressure and alcohol consumption was more positive for students, particularly men, with motivational orientations of feeling controlled by others. Knee and Neighbors concluded that the same characteristics that lead controlled, extrinsically motivated students to consume alcohol might also lead them to be responsive to social and peer influences for positive change in their alcohol consumption patterns.

Other studies and writings have focused on the role of alcohol and problem drinking among college freshmen (DeJong, 1999; Leibsohn, 1994; Turrisi, Padilla, & Wiersma, 2000; Yu & Shacket, 2001). Leibsohn (1994) studied the relationship between alcohol and drug

use and peer group association of college freshmen by comparing their high school and early college alcohol and drug consumption patterns. Specifically related to alcohol use, the data revealed that both quantity and frequency of students' alcohol consumption increased early in college, but the number of times students drank to intoxication did not. The data also indicated that new freshmen seek college friends similar to their high school friends with whom to consume alcohol. Leibsohn concluded that alcohol consumption patterns were important factors for freshmen in selecting their friends at college.

Yu and Shacket (2001) examined the effect of students' drinking behaviors in high school on their alcohol consumption patterns and related problems in college by interviewing 813 students from five randomly selected colleges in New York State. The results indicated that both quantity and frequency of students' alcohol consumption in high school had a significant effect on their alcohol consumption patterns in college. However, quantity of consumption in high school was a more accurate predictor of alcohol consumption in college than was frequency of consumption in high school. The effect of students' alcohol consumption in high school on their alcohol-related problems in college was found to be moderately significant. Interestingly, this time frequency of consumption in high school was a more accurate predictor than quantity of consumption in high school. Yu and Shacket concluded that prevention initiatives to reduce alcohol consumption by college students should begin in high school by reducing or delaying alcohol consumption by high school students.

Turrisi et al. (2000) compared and contrasted the drinking tendencies, drinking-related consequences, and drinking beliefs of three groups of students: 1) traditional-age, approximately 18 year old, incoming freshmen; 2) non-traditional-age, approximately 22

year old, incoming freshmen; and 3) approximately 23 year old upperclassmen. Turrisi et al. found that the traditional- and non-traditional-age freshmen consumed similar amounts of alcohol, and both consumed more alcohol than the upperclassmen. Interestingly, the traditional-age freshmen were less likely than non-traditional-age freshmen and upperclassmen to experience drinking-related consequences. Each of the three groups also varied significantly in their drinking beliefs. These findings support other research that one-size-fits-all alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives are not effective (Wechsler et al., 1994; Wechsler, Nelson, & Weitzman, 2000).

DeJong (1999), in response to a study indicating that approximately one in three high school seniors reported being drunk in the previous 30 days, asserted that higher education officials have a responsibility to new students and their parents or guardians to develop and communicate new, tough expectations related to alcohol. Traditional new student orientation discussions and programs on alcohol and other drugs need to be replaced with new, tough institutional messages for freshmen during orientation. DeJong advocated developing institutional orientation messages centering on the following 11 points:

1. Members of the college community are expected to commit themselves to promoting a healthy social and academic environment where learning and campus life are not denigrated by the misuse of alcohol and drugs.
2. The college's expectation is that all students will be fully committed to maximizing what they achieve while enrolled here. Students who are looking for a "party" will not be happy.
3. The college has just completed an overhaul of our academic program to ensure that graduates meet the highest standards of excellence. We are

**demanding more of students than ever before, which is reflected in new graduation requirements that include extensive community service.**

- 4. The college has created a mastery-based grading system so that there is a tighter connection between hard work and reward. Weekends do not start on Thursday night. Class attendance will be a factor in grading, and all mid-term examinations and quizzes will be given on Fridays.**
- 5. Student norms on this campus show no tolerance for alcohol and drug impairment and the harm it creates. The vast majority of our students want a college environment that is conducive to study and personal growth.**
- 6. This college has appointed students, faculty, and administrators to a health and safety advocacy committee, whose job is to ensure that the rights of responsible students are not compromised by the alcohol or other drug use of others on campus.**
- 7. The college will continue to enforce a “zero tolerance” policy for alcohol-related violence, vandalism, and other serious misconduct. Violent and destructive behavior will not be excused for any reason, especially that of being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.**
- 8. This college has a legal obligation to take reasonable steps to provide a safe environment for all students. Restricting the conditions under which students legally consume alcohol, and then consistently enforcing these conditions, is an important part of exercising that obligation.**

9. This college is also obligated to enforce the minimum age drinking law.

This does not mean curfews, bed checks, dorm searches, hall monitors, and other intrusive enforcement measures. What it does mean is that any infraction of which school officials become aware will be treated as a serious breach of the law, which it is.

10. College officials continue to work actively with student groups to create regular social events and attractive gathering places where students can enjoy themselves without having to drink or be around alcohol- or other drug-impaired classmates.

11. This college has joined with local community leaders, law enforcement personnel, and businesses in a town-gown coalition that will ensure that students receive a clear and consistent message about responsible alcohol service and consumption. (pp. 1-2)

Alcohol-related problems associated with men's and women's Greek-letter organizations, particularly men's fraternities, have been the subject of much research. The next section of this literature review focuses on the relationship and all-too-close association between student alcohol abuse and the college fraternity.

### **Alcohol Abuse and the College Fraternity**

Fraternity and sorority members, especially fraternity men, appear to be particularly prone to alcohol abuse and related problems among college students (Alva, 1998; Baer, 1994; Borsari & Carey, 1999; Cashin et al., 1998; Chaloupka & Wechsler, 1996; Danielson et al., 2001; Goodwin, 1992; HEC, 1997; Kuh & Arnold, 1993; Lichtenfeld & Kayson, 1994; Montgomery, Benedicto, & Haemmerlie, 1993; Montgomery & Haemmerlie, 1993;

O'Connor et al., 1996; Rabow & Duncan-Schill, 1995; Wechsler et al., 1996; Wechsler et al., 2002; Werner & Greene, 1992). Dr. Henry Wechsler, Harvard School of Public Health professor and international research expert on alcohol abuse among college students, asserted that "the biggest predictor of binge drinking in college is residency in a fraternity or sorority. That's number one by far" (Philpott, 1997, p. 6).

Tragically, binge/heavy episodic drinking and other alcohol-related problems associated with men's fraternities have resulted in numerous student injuries, even deaths, on American college campuses. The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1997) cited specific alcohol-related tragedies involving men's fraternities:

*Baton Rouge, Louisiana*

At Louisiana State University, a 20-year-old Sigma Alpha Epsilon pledge died from alcohol poisoning after an off-campus party to celebrate his new fraternity membership. Within three weeks, another pledge sued not only the fraternity but also the university itself. (p. 6)

*Cambridge, Massachusetts*

A freshman at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology went into a coma after a bout of heavy drinking at the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity and later died. The student's blood alcohol level was .41 percent, more than five times the legal drinking limit in Massachusetts. (p. 6)

*Chapel Hill, North Carolina*

On graduation day, five students died in an early morning fire at a fraternity house at the University of North Carolina where a late-night party had been held. Authorities later reported that four of the victims had high blood alcohol concentrations, which probably contributed to their inability to escape. (p. 6)

*Amherst, Massachusetts*

At the University of Massachusetts, a former student who said she was raped at a fraternity party reached a \$200,000 settlement with the fraternity. As a part of the settlement, the fraternity admitted that it had provided inadequate security. (p. 6)

*Durham, New Hampshire*

At the University of New Hampshire, an 18-year-old sophomore returned to campus to begin the fall term. That night, at a party, he plummeted 35 feet from a fraternity rooftop and died. The fraternity was eventually disbanded by college administrators. (pp. 6-7)

*Los Angeles, California*

At the University of California at Los Angeles, academic officials suspended a fraternity for violating the state's minimum drinking age law after three fraternity men were accused of raping a sorority woman during a party. (p. 7)

In light of these and other tragedies, the relationship between alcohol and the college fraternity has been the subject of much research. In their review of research literature from 1980 to 1998 on fraternity drinking, Borsari and Carey (1999) discovered five recurring themes: 1) a fraternity provides continuity for students' pre-college drinking habits and

patterns; 2) a fraternity's membership selection process perpetuates the fraternity's existing alcohol culture, which prospective members perceive as excessive; 3) alcohol is central to fraternity socialization, particularly that which occurs during the pledge/new member period; 4) fraternity members overestimate other members' alcohol consumption, which is compounded by limited social interaction and comparison with non-members; and 5) fraternity houses, the physical structures, provide harbor for excessive (sometimes illegal) alcohol consumption where the negative consequences of drinking are buffered and minimized. The results of their literature review are consistent with other research findings that effective alcohol education and abuse prevention programs are not one-size-fits-all (Wechsler et al., 1994; Wechsler, Nelson, et al., 2000), and education and prevention programs targeted at fraternities must reflect the specific alcohol culture of the individual fraternity.

Danielson et al. (2001) also reviewed literature on college drinking behaviors and Greek affiliation and revealed similar themes. Their review yielded the following: 1) fraternity members drink more frequently and more heavily than non-members; 2) fraternity members, specifically fraternity house residents, are more likely than non-members to cite reasons for drinking that correlate with heavy drinking and other negative reasons; 3) students who drink more frequently and heavily in high school, and who experience negative consequences from their drinking, are more likely to join a fraternity or sorority; 4) fraternity culture and socialization processes are alcohol-centric, particularly influential during the pledge/new member period during which acceptable norms, beliefs, and behaviors are learned; 5) fraternity and sorority members overestimate the frequency and quantity of drinking among their close friends and reference groups; and 6) fraternity and sorority



members, fraternity house residents in particular, are more likely than non-members to experience alcohol-related negative consequences.

Individual research studies, most of which were referenced in the aforementioned reviews, substantiate the alcohol-related problems associated with Greek organizations. Rabow and Duncan-Schill (1995) illustrated the influential alcohol culture of the college campus, specifically fraternities, by examining the incorporation of alcohol into the social roles and lives of college students, and the centrality of alcohol to the social and structural aspects of college life. The findings supported their hypothesis that alcohol ideas, beliefs, and consumption patterns are socially defined and reinforced on the college campus. Alcohol consumption was linked directly to the academic and social demands placed on students, and it served as a means of relaxation, celebration, and expression of unity. Although socially defined alcohol norms existed with various student groups and living organizations, fraternities were identified as having particularly influential alcohol cultures.

Alva (1998) examined the social normative behaviors and tendencies of college students affiliated with fraternities and sororities in relation to alcohol consumption patterns. Data gathered on personal alcohol use, perceptions of alcohol use by average students, and beliefs about consequences of alcohol use were compared between fraternity and sorority members and non-members. Alva found that fraternity and sorority members reported consuming alcohol on weekly and monthly bases at significantly higher levels than did non-members. Members of Greek organizations reported consuming alcohol at private locations and parties more frequently than did non-Greeks. Greek students, particularly fraternity men, also were more likely to approve of higher levels of alcohol consumption than non-Greek

students were. Finally, fraternity and sorority members more than non-members consumed alcohol to facilitate fun and bonding.

Montgomery and Haemmerlie (1993) studied college students' overall, academic, social, and personal-emotional adjustments, as well as their commitment to school and career goals, in relation to alcohol consumption patterns and Greek membership. They found that students' overall adjustment to college was not related significantly to consuming or getting drunk on beer. However, getting drunk on hard liquor was related negatively to students' overall, academic, and personal-emotional adjustments. Greek membership had a negative effect on students' academic and personal-emotional adjustments, but a positive effect on their social adjustment. Greek students did not differ significantly from non-Greek students on total adjustment scores or in their commitment to school and career.

Montgomery et al. (1993) examined students' personal and social motivations for consuming alcohol in a study of 109 undergraduates at the University of Missouri – Rolla. The researchers found that alcohol consumption was linked more closely to students' social motivations than to their personal motivations. Men consumed alcohol for both personal and social motivation factors more than women did. Specifically, men consumed alcohol more than women did for social reasons of meeting new people and members of the opposite sex and for personal reasons of feeling better about themselves. In addition, alcohol consumption was directly correlated with fraternity and sorority membership and the number of campus organizations in which students were involved.

Wechsler et al. (1996) compared alcohol consumption patterns and behaviors of Greek students with those of non-Greek students. The researchers analyzed whether public perception of fraternities and sororities is justified, and whether educational and judicial

efforts to address alcohol-related problems are effective. Wechsler et al. found that when compared with non-Greek students, Greek students, particularly in-residence fraternity men, were more likely to drink, binge drink, state the importance of drinking, experience negative consequences from drinking, experience the secondary effects of binge drinking, and deny having a drinking problem. Specifically, 86% of fraternity house residents, compared with 45% of non-fraternity men, were binge drinkers; 80% of sorority house residents, compared with 35% of non-sorority women, were binge drinkers. Also, 83% of fraternity house residents (42% of non-fraternity men) and 78% of sorority house residents (38% of non-sorority women) reported having their sleep or studies interrupted in the previous year by other students' drinking. In addition, in-residence fraternity men and in-residence sorority women reported few consequences from university officials or judicial proceedings in response to their negative alcohol-related behavior.

Lichtenfeld and Kayson (1994) investigated the relationship and interaction among age, reports of family members with alcohol-related behavior problems, and membership in a Greek organization with self-reported behavior problems related to alcohol consumption. The effects of age, reports of family members with drinking problems, and fraternity and sorority affiliation were found to be significant factors related to self-reported alcohol-related problems. Those who reported having nuclear family members with drinking problems and younger people (less than 35 years of age) experienced more alcohol-related problems. Significant interaction was found between age and fraternity or sorority membership. Specifically, younger members of fraternities and sororities reported more alcohol-related problems than did their peers who were not members and older people (35 or older) who were fraternity or sorority members.

Cashin et al. (1998) studied alcohol consumption patterns, consequences, and belief systems in relation to students' levels of involvement with fraternities or sororities, ranging from no involvement (non-members) to active involvement (fraternity and sorority leaders). The researchers found that members of fraternities and sororities consumed significantly more alcohol per week, engaged in binge/heavy episodic drinking more frequently, and experienced more negative drinking-related consequences than did non-members. Interestingly, fraternity and sorority leaders were found to have equally high or higher levels of alcohol consumption, rates of binge/heavy episodic drinking, and cases of negative consequences when compared to fraternity and sorority members of lesser involvement. Related to belief systems, the data suggested that "students see alcohol as a vehicle for friendship, social activity and sexual opportunity, and these beliefs occur to a greater extent among Greeks than non-Greeks" (p. 69).

Baer (1994) studied students' perceptions of college drinking norms prior to their matriculation and during their first year by asking their assessment of the frequency and quantity of drinking norms of different residential groups. The findings revealed that "norms for drinking in the Greek system were more extreme than norms for drinking in other residential settings" (p. 47). Students who joined fraternities and sororities during their first year of college perceived drinking norms in Greek organizations as more extreme, perceiving a heavy drinking norm among fraternities in particular. However, this perception also existed prior to matriculation, invalidating the research hypothesis that Greek membership causes different norms or a different course of norm development.

Goodwin (1992) also investigated the patterns of alcohol and drug use among fraternity and sorority members. Factors related to alcohol consumption were examined,

including the acceptability of drinking behavior and intoxication, as well as pre-existing high school drinking patterns. Results indicated that the bases for alcohol and drug use among fraternity men and sorority women were similar. However, men used alcohol and drugs significantly more than women did. In addition, students' high school drinking behavior was found to be a strong predictor of their college drinking behavior.

Research has shown that college students with established drinking patterns from high school are attracted to Greek organizations, particularly fraternities (Borsari & Carey, 1999; Danielson et al., 2001; O'Connor et al., 1996; Wechsler et al., 1996; Werner & Greene, 1992). In the same study referenced earlier, Wechsler et al. (1996) found that 60% of fraternity house residents, compared with 34% of non-fraternity men, reported binge drinking in high school; 35% of sorority house residents reported binge drinking in high school, compared with 28% of non-sorority women. Wechsler et al. concluded that fraternities and sororities serve an enabling role for students coming to college with problem drinking patterns from high school.

O'Connor et al. (1996) investigated the impact of students' prior alcohol use on their decision to join fraternities. The researchers studied whether men who drank in greater quantities were more likely to join fraternities than were men who drank less, and whether men with greater problem histories would join more frequently than would men with lesser histories. Peer influence on alcohol use also was evaluated to determine if men whose drinking patterns were highly influenced by their peers would join fraternities at greater rates. The findings indicated that students' prior alcohol use was found to be a strong predictor of fraternity membership. Specifically, men who self-identified as heavy drinkers and men with more problematic alcohol-related histories pledged at greater levels.

Werner and Greene (1992) examined problem drinking among college freshmen by surveying 308 entering college freshmen and analyzing the relationship between their attitudes on alcohol and problem drinking and their interest in Greek organizations. The data revealed that nearly 90% of the students who self-identified as frequent binge drinkers intended on joining a Greek organization. The researchers found that “college students intending to join the Greek system are more likely to be frequent, heavy, and problem drinkers. Students appear to arrive at college with the expectation that the Greek system will support a heavy drinking problem” (p. 491). This study supports other research that 1) Greek organizations are attractive to students who are high-risk alcohol users, and 2) Greek organizations need to be a primary target of university alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives.

Studies also have focused on the role of alcohol in the first year experience of fraternity and sorority members, predominantly freshmen pledges/new members. Kuh and Arnold (1993) examined the impact of fraternity culture and socialization in influencing alcohol beliefs and consumption patterns of pledges/new members. Their study’s overarching research question was, “How does the pledgship experience, as a socialization process, influence alcohol use” (p. 327)? Qualitative measures were used to assess fraternity culture by touring chapter houses, attending formal events, observing informal activities, and analyzing institutional documents and fraternity materials. The findings revealed that alcohol was the main attraction of many social events to the extent that no available alcohol indicated the end of most events. Certain physical characteristics of the fraternity houses revealed the importance of alcohol to the groups. Further, alcohol rules and regulations were found to be pivotal in the systematic issuing of privileges and punishments by older, initiated members to

instill normative behaviors and values in pledges/new members. “Thus, alcohol use became a privilege, symbolizing full membership in the group [fraternity], an important goal for most newcomers [pledges/new members], given what they had to endure to attain such status” (p. 331).

The aforementioned research on the relationship between student alcohol abuse and the college fraternity provides a solid foundation for designing and implementing alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. Effective alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives targeted at fraternities and sororities must focus more on students’ social motivations than their personal motivations for consuming alcohol (Montgomery et al., 1993; Rabow & Duncan-Schill, 1995). These programs and initiatives must emphasize the broad social context and alcohol culture in which students function versus traditional efforts that focus more narrowly on changing the characteristics of individual students (e.g., students’ personal reasons for consuming alcohol) and the personal effects of their alcohol consumption (Cashin et al., 1998; Clapp & McDonnell, 2000; Wechsler et al., 1994; Wechsler, Nelson, et al., 2000).

Beyond the context of the college fraternity, the problem of alcohol abuse among college students and its impact on higher education have captured the attention of college and university presidents across the nation. The next section of this literature review focuses on the growing concern of college and university presidents about the problem of student alcohol abuse, as well as their emerging roles and responsibilities in relation to this problem.

### **Student Alcohol Abuse and Presidential Leadership**

**The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1997) expressed the collective concern of college and university presidents about the student alcohol abuse problem facing higher education institutions:**

**Student binge drinking and the many problems that arise from it are among the most serious threats faced by our nation's institutions of higher education. Many of the things we [presidents] worry about – student death and injury, weak academic performance, property damage and vandalism, strained town-gown relations, negative publicity – are linked to student alcohol abuse. (p. 4)**

**This concern of college and university presidents about the problem of alcohol abuse among college students must translate into action (DeJong, 1998; Gianini & Nicholson, 1994; HEC, 1997; Malloy, 1998; Milgram & Anderson, 1996; Pierce, 2000; Wechsler, Lee, et al., 2000). Wechsler, Lee, et al. (2000) discussed the emerging role of college and university presidents in addressing student alcohol abuse and the problems that are resulting on campuses across the country:**

**Until the mid-1990s, student drinking issues were largely the responsibility of alcohol educators and deans of students. Since then, in association with extensive media coverage and the release of several national studies of drinking behavior, college presidents are often involved. Many of them [presidents] are frequently included in statewide and regional coalitions that address the problem jointly. (p. 199)**

**In recognition and support of this increasing presidential involvement, The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1997) established the Presidents**



Leadership Group to create an overall blueprint and specific recommendations for alcohol and other drug prevention on college campuses. The Presidents Leadership Group developed 13 recommendations for effective prevention, each of which involves college presidents:

1. College presidents should work to ensure that school officials routinely collect data on the extent of the alcohol and other drug problem on campus and to make this information available.
2. College presidents should frame discussions about alcohol and other drug prevention in a context that other senior administrators, faculty, students, alumni, and trustees care about—excellence in education.
3. College presidents should define alcohol and other drug use not as a problem of the campus alone, but of the entire community, which will require community-level action to solve.
4. College presidents should use every opportunity to speak out and write about alcohol and other drug prevention to reinforce it as a priority concern and to push for change.
5. College presidents should work to ensure that all elements of the college community avoid providing “mixed messages” that might encourage alcohol and other drug use [emphasis added].
6. College presidents should demonstrate their commitment to alcohol and other drug prevention by budgeting sufficient resources to address the problem.

7. College presidents should appoint a campus-wide task force that (a) includes other senior administrators, faculty, and students, (b) has community representation, and (c) reports directly to the president.
8. College presidents should appoint other senior administrators, faculty, and students to participate in a campus-community coalition that is mandated to address alcohol and other drug issues in the community as a whole.
9. College presidents should lead a broad exploration of their institution's infrastructure and the basic premises of its educational program to see how they affect alcohol and other drug use.
10. College presidents should offer new initiatives to help students become better integrated into the intellectual life of the school, change student norms away from alcohol and other drug use, and make it easier to identify students in trouble with substance use.
11. College presidents should take the lead in identifying ways to effect alcohol and other drug prevention through economic development in the community.
12. As private citizens, college presidents should be involved in policy change at the state and local level, working for new laws and regulations that will affect the community as a whole.
13. Acknowledging that substance abuse is a problem that their schools have in common, college presidents should participate in state, regional, and

**national associations to build support for appropriate changes in public policy. (p. 12)**

**DeJong (1998) synthesized the Presidents Leadership Group's 13 recommendations with the following summary:**

**Presidential leadership is key. This means putting the prevention of alcohol abuse at the top of the higher education agenda. It means speaking out and writing about the issue at every opportunity. It means reaching out to campus, community, and state-level groups to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for prevention. It means building support for new programs and policies, especially those with a focus on environmental change. In short, college and university presidents must be vocal, visible, and visionary. (p. 17)**

**While the Presidents Leadership Group identified how presidents should get involved in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, getting them to do so can be the greater challenge. Gianini and Nicholson (1994) asserted that by making available to presidents campus-specific, alcohol-related data generated from systematic campus-based assessment, the extent of the campus alcohol problem will be illuminated and will result in greater presidential involvement. In addition, Gianini and Nicholson offered five strategies to "hook" college presidents on alcohol abuse prevention, each of which reflects a clear understanding of presidential roles and priorities: 1) tie alcohol abuse prevention into the mission and vision of the institution; 2) develop clear and effective alcohol-related policies; 3) develop a commitment and blueprint to acquire additional resources for alcohol abuse prevention; 4) create media opportunities for the president, as well as the institution, to be**

publicized as a leader in alcohol abuse prevention; and 5) position the president as a leader in alcohol abuse prevention in the local community.

Malloy (1998) also wrote on presidential leadership strategies to reduce alcohol-related problems on college campuses. Malloy offered four strategies for college presidents to employ: 1) evaluate the alcohol abuse problem on campus and assess the extent of the problem; 2) review intervention strategies for students who experience alcohol-related problems and disciplinary procedures and sanctions for students who commit alcohol-related violations; 3) seek student input and involvement in changing accepted alcohol-related practices and traditions on campus; and 4) seek faculty participation in developing an academic culture in which alcohol is not the centerpiece of student life. Malloy concluded:

The problems of binge drinking and widespread alcohol abuse will not soon disappear from our campuses. But with thoughtful presidential leadership, we can creatively engage our communities to prevent those forms of alcohol-induced conduct that violate our sense of peace and security and that make us passive contributors to the degradation of student lives. (p. 24)

Not only must college presidents assume a greater leadership role in addressing alcohol-related problems on campus, trustees must assume a role in encouraging alcohol-abuse prevention programs and initiatives. After examining hundreds of outstanding alcohol abuse prevention programs, Milgram and Anderson (1996) developed five recommendations for college presidents and trustees to consider for alcohol abuse prevention programs and initiatives:

1. Alcohol abuse prevention efforts should be well grounded, clearly defined, and integrated into the fabric of the institution.

2. Programs should be comprehensive, long term, and supported by the administration and the community being served.
3. Campus initiatives should be broad-based, targeted to multiple constituencies, well marketed, and continually evaluated.
4. Staffing and resources must be adequate to accomplish the task.
5. Collaboration with other programs, both on and off campus, will positively affect the outcome of the prevention efforts. (p. 24)

Although it is not the trustees' role to design and implement alcohol abuse prevention programs, it is their role to ask the right questions (Milgram & Anderson, 1996). Milgram and Anderson developed five key questions for trustees to ask relative to their institution's alcohol abuse prevention program:

1. When was the last honest review of campus alcohol abuse prevention efforts?
2. Is a comprehensive alcohol policy in place for the campus community? If so, is it supported by staff, alumni, faculty, and students?
3. Is there a reasonable plan to address current and future needs?
4. Are current resources adequate?
5. Are existing resources being used well? (pp. 24-25)

In addition, Milgram and Anderson asserted that it is the trustees' role to mandate campus collaboration and integration of alcohol abuse prevention initiatives among departments and to ensure that assistance programs are available to students as well as faculty and staff who exhibit alcohol-related problems.

Pierce (2000) also developed a series of questions for trustees to consider in determining the effectiveness of institutional initiatives to engage students and student organizations at various levels in alcohol abuse prevention and intervention programs:

1. Does the campus engage students in designing attractive social alternatives to alcohol-reliant events? Are students engaged in designing alcohol prevention programs? Do campus programs educate students on how to help others who are suffering from alcohol poisoning?
2. Does the campus educate student groups about risk management in relation to alcohol?
3. Does the institution effectively share with the community available information about excessive drinking? Is the information explicit about how excessive drinking is antithetical to learning?
4. Does the institution effectively educate students about the legal consequences of violating drinking laws and of driving under the influence of alcohol?
5. Is the administration developing a database that documents alcohol-related incidents so that the campus community understands the magnitude of the problem and can assess whether new alcohol prevention programs are effective?
6. Is the campus participating in a national study of campus alcohol use to assess the alcohol consumption of its own students? (p. 27)

Pierce asserted that an affirmative response to these questions, along with efforts to eliminate alcohol-related mixed messages (e.g., tailgating that promotes excessive drinking; selling

beer mugs and shot glasses in the campus bookstore; and promoting alcohol use through campus radio, television, newspaper, and Web advertising) to students will help reduce college students' abuse of alcohol. Pierce concluded with a powerful, challenging statement:

Ultimately, if colleges and universities are to reduce alcohol abuse, we [trustees] will need to act carefully and deliberately, with the clear goal of not just educating students but changing their behavior. This effort will require campus and community leaders to move out of our collective state of denial about excessive drinking. Most of all, it will require us [trustees] to disabuse our students and our communities of the notion that drinking really is just a part of students being students. (p. 27)

The research literature on the problem of alcohol abuse among college students and presidential responses to the problem is extensive and varied. Equally extensive and varied are the alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives that have been implemented to combat the problem. The next section of this literature review now explores the characteristics and effects of these programs and initiatives and examines five more recent initiatives – social normative marketing, environmental management, increased student involvement, increased faculty involvement, and parental notification – to reduce alcohol abuse and its harmful effects among college students.

### **Alcohol Education and Abuse Prevention Programs and Initiatives**

Given the magnitude of the problem of alcohol abuse among college students and its impact on American higher education, college and universities have been engaged in a number of alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. However, these programs and initiatives vary regarding how and when to most effectively combat this

problem. Some initiatives are based on theoretical models that espouse effective interventions occur before students enter college, focusing on students in high school and their transition from high school to college (Baer, 1994; DeJong, 1999; Goodwin, 1992; O'Connor et al., 1996; Turrise et al., 2000; Werner & Greene, 1992; Yu & Shacket, 2001). Yet, other theoretical models maintain that effective interventions focus on influencing students' college experiences, particularly their early college experiences (Cashin et al., 1998; Kuh & Arnold, 1993; Leibsohn, 1994; Montgomery & Haemmerlie, 1993; Rabow & Duncan-Schill, 1995; Wechsler et al., 1998). Still other models emphasize that effective interventions focus on the relationship between students and their perceptions of the alcohol culture and attempt to alter students' misperceptions of their peers' alcohol use (Agostinelli et al., 1995; Baer & Carney, 1993; Baer et al., 1991; Barnett et al., 1996; DeJong & Linkenbach, 1999; Haines, 1996; Haines & Spear, 1996; Meilman et al., 1997; Peeler et al., 2000; Perkins, 1997; Perkins & Berkowitz, 1986; Perkins et al., 1999; Perkins & Wechsler, 1996; Zimmerman, 1997) and to alter the environmental conditions that contribute to students' binge/heavy episodic drinking (DeJong & Davidson, 2000; DeJong et al., 1998; Epstein, 1995; Gebhardt et al., 2000; Johannessen et al., 2001).

Setting aside the issues of how and when to most effectively combat the problem of college student alcohol abuse, research on the characteristics of effective alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives has yielded both common and unique findings (Ametrano, 1992; Baer, Kivlahan, Blume, McKnight, & Marlatt, 2001; Hanson & Engs, 1995; McCabe, 2002; Mills-Novoa, 1994; Walters, 2000; Wechsler, Kelley, et al., 2000; Wechsler, Nelson, et al., 2000; Werch, Pappas, & Castellon-Vogel, 1996). The need to discern the characteristics of effective alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and



initiatives was accentuated by Keeling (1998): "Higher education...cannot have as a credible policy the simple option available to secondary schools: 'just say no.' It is not enough for institutions of higher education to advocate (or 'teach') abstinence" (p. 51).

In a study of effective alcohol and other drug education and prevention programs, Mills-Novoa (1994) examined the results of a two-year qualitative study conducted at the University of Northern Arizona of institutions receiving financial support from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE). From the 92 programs receiving FIPSE funding, five institutions were selected to participate in this multiple case study based on their overall education and prevention program plan and organization, campus policies and peer education efforts, educational materials, special populations, and goal attainment. In reviewing the data, Mills-Novoa identified thirteen factors considered to be most critical in creating and sustaining successful, effective alcohol and other drug education and prevention programs:

1. The program receives strong administrative support and recognition both vertically and horizontally in the institution. (p. 68)
2. The program plans to institutionalize itself from the beginning and pursues this objective persistently. (p. 68)
3. The program affects institutional regulations regarding alcohol and other drug use through policy formation, communication, and enforcement. (p. 69)
4. The program targets ways to encourage individuals to personalize substance abuse issues and involves many campus groups, creating a ripple effect. (p. 70)

5. **The program creates a strong marketing approach for publicizing the program, its activities, positive role models, and prevention messages. (p. 70)**
6. **The program capitalizes on local, state, and federal visibility and recognition for program excellence to increase immunity to institutional budget cuts. (p. 71)**
7. **The program selects program staff for diversity of skills, strong community ties, broad-based expertise in prevention education with special expertise in substance abuse, excellent communication skills, personal compatibility, enthusiasm, and dedicated, persistent commitment. (p. 72)**
8. **The program promotes an institutional environment that supports no use for students under legal age, with an emphasis on responsible, personal decision making; the program also stresses a nonjudgmental, positive, fact-based approach in disseminating information. (p. 73)**
9. **The program ties alcohol and other drug use to the impact on personal health, self-esteem, and wellness, promotes activities that reinforce the positive, drug-free elements of student life, and emphasizes alternative activities and natural highs. (p. 74)**
10. **The program demonstrates a clear understanding of the special needs of the institution and its culturally diverse student population and finds prevention strategies to fit the campus. (p. 75)**

11. The program uses a needs assessment as a first step to detail alcohol and other drug-related problems or issues (such as acquaintance rape, vandalism, stress) and to identify what resources exist on and off campus to address these issues. (p. 76)
12. The program is allied organizationally with a department or center that adds credibility to its efforts, promotes a positive image, and contributes information and resources. (p. 77)
13. The program is based on a sound planning process and reviews and evaluates its efforts on a regular basis. (p. 77)

In a later, related study, Werch et al. (1996) examined the programmatic and institutional factors associated with college and university alcohol and other drug education and prevention programs funded by FIPSE from 1987 to 1990. The researchers also examined the extent to which program comprehensiveness, program outcomes, program integration, and environmental factors were being addressed by these programs. Werch et al. found that FIPSE-funded alcohol and other drug education and prevention programs:

- 1) provided a significant level of programming for college students; 2) did not utilize state-of-the-art social, behavioral, environmental, or electronic media prevention strategies;
- 3) employed unsophisticated theoretical models and evaluation techniques for planning prevention strategies and assessing their effects; 4) affected campus policies but not students' alcohol and drug use; 5) limited their volunteer prevention training efforts to students; and 6) varied by institutional type. Werch et al. concluded that "future prevention planning, implementation, program evaluation, and research should take into account...individual institutional variations to enhance effectiveness" (p. 73).

Research on gender differences in collegiate risk factors for heavy episodic drinking reveals important implications for the design and implementation of effective alcohol education and abuse prevention programs. From an electronic, web-based survey of 2,041 undergraduates attending a large Midwestern university, McCabe (2002) found that upperclasswomen (sophomores, juniors, and seniors) were much less likely to engage in heavy episodic drinking than freshman women were. Conversely, freshman men were much less likely to engage in heavy episodic drinking than were upperclassmen. In addition, living in a fraternity house was a significant risk factor for increased frequency of heavy episodic drinking for men; however, living in a sorority house was not a significant risk factor for women. Living in a substance-free residence hall or living off-campus in a house or apartment were all related significantly to less heavy episodic drinking for men, but more frequent heavy episodic drinking for women. "Overall, these findings provide further evidence that risk factors for heavy episodic drinking operate differently based on gender" (p. 54).

Ametrano (1992) studied the effectiveness of a series of workshops at a large Midwestern university that addressed the psychosocial and cognitive factors that contribute to alcohol and drug abuse among college students. The workshops were designed to assist college freshmen in understanding their personal reasons for using alcohol and drugs, developing skills to resist the pressure from peers to drink and use drugs, and learning about assertiveness and stress reduction strategies. The results indicated that the workshops had no significant effect on students' frequency of and reasons for alcohol and drug use. Unlike the McCabe (2002) study, Ametrano found no significant differences between genders in the actual use of alcohol, however, gender differences were found in the reasons for using

alcohol; “peer pressure” for men and “to enjoy what I’m doing” for women were the most significant reasons for using alcohol. This study provided important implications that substantiate the need for effective alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives to focus on gender-specific motivations for consuming alcohol.

Hanson and Engs (1995) examined the relationship between students’ self-reported alcohol consumption patterns and related problems and college administrators’ perceptions of those patterns and related problems at 52 colleges and universities. The relationship between students’ alcohol consumption patterns and the existence of campus alcohol policies, programs, and services also was examined. For this study, alcohol policies, programs, and services included having a campus alcohol coordinator, an alcohol task force, strict alcohol policies, alcohol education and programming, alcohol education and/or programming as a high administrative priority, and an emphasis on education or enforcement. The findings revealed no significant difference between institutions with and without alcohol policies, programs, and services and students’ alcohol consumption patterns and related problems. In response, Hanson and Engs developed six recommendations for university officials to consider when developing effective alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, specifically effective alcohol policies:

1. Current policies concerning the control of consumption should be terminated.
2. All attempts to stigmatize alcohol as a “dirty drug,” as a poison, as inherently harmful, or as a product to be abhorred and shunned should be terminated.

3. Colleges should formulate and implement new policies that incorporate the concept of responsible drinking along with the choice of abstinence.
4. Systematic efforts should be made to clarify and emphasize the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable drinking.
5. Unacceptable drinking behavior should be strongly sanctioned, both legally and socially.
6. Educational efforts should encourage the moderate use of alcohol among those who choose to drink. (pp. 111-112)

Hanson and Engs concluded that university officials must avoid simple solutions to the complex problem of alcohol abuse among college students. "Unfortunately, the real solution lies not in more questionable control of [alcohol] consumption laws but in the wisdom and courage to move beyond such simplistic answers to address a complex social problem" (p. 112).

Walters (2000) tested a brief, nonconfrontational alcohol intervention program in the form of personal, mailed feedback to students about their drinking patterns to determine the program's effectiveness as an alcohol education and abuse prevention initiative. Students who self-identified as moderate to heavy drinkers were assigned to one of three treatment groups: 1) those receiving a two-hour informational session followed by personal, mailed feedback about their drinking patterns; 2) those receiving only personal, mailed feedback about their drinking patterns; and 3) those receiving no treatment. After completing six weeks of quantity and frequency of alcohol consumption testing, the students receiving only personal, mailed feedback about their drinking reported the most significant decrease in alcohol consumption. The findings from this study suggested that brief interventions with

personalized feedback for students who are moderate to heavy drinkers are as effective, if not more effective, than longer, more intense and expensive interventions. Walters concluded that “there may be inherent advantages to this brief, non-confrontational intervention that warrant at least a second glance, if not a place in a larger framework of campus health promotion services” (p. 238).

In a related study, Baer et al. (2001) tracked the four-year drinking patterns of 363 University of Washington students who self-identified as high-risk drinkers to determine the effectiveness of an alcohol abuse intervention initiative. One-half of the students received a brief, non-confrontational intervention in the form of one-on-one assessment interviews, motivational in tone, during their freshman year, followed by personal interviews three months later and individualized, mailed feedback during their sophomore year. Through the follow-up interview and mailed feedback, students were informed of the consequences of binge drinking and how their own alcohol consumption patterns and negative consequences from drinking compared with those of their peers. After four years, Baer et al. found that the 43% of the students who received the intervention reported decreases in alcohol-related problems while only 33% of the students who did not receive the intervention reported decreases in alcohol-related problems. Although there was no significant difference in the frequency of alcohol consumption between those who received the intervention and those who did not, there was a significant difference in the quantity of alcohol consumption (i.e., those who received the intervention experienced a steady decrease over time in the amount of alcohol they consumed). The findings from this study are consistent with other research indicating that brief, non-confrontational interventions are effective strategies to reduce alcohol abuse among college students.

Advances in multimedia technology are making it possible for students to self-explore the complex social and interpersonal topic of alcohol and are targeting alcohol abuse and its harmful effects among college students. The effectiveness of one such alcohol education and abuse prevention multimedia program, Alcohol 101, was evaluated by Reis, Riley, and Baer (2000). Alcohol 101 is an interactive CD-ROM that incorporates video, text, music, graphics, and animation along with behavior changing and decision-making strategies for safe and responsible alcohol use. Alcohol 101 is based on three psychosocial factors – perceived norms, expectations about the consequences of a behavior, and self-efficacy – that are predictive of behaviors like alcohol consumption. Using a pre- and post-test methodology, the researchers found that “student learning about safe and responsible use of alcohol as measured by self-report was generally in the desired direction and supportive of the impact of the CD-ROM learning experience” (p. 61).

Wechsler, Kelley, et al. (2000) analyzed the results of a Harvard School of Public Health survey of 734 college and university officials designed to assess the prevention efforts and program trends nationally related to alcohol abuse among college students. They found that 97% of the institutions provided general alcohol education programs and 77% had a designated university official responsible for alcohol and other drug abuse prevention initiatives; 67% of the residential campuses offered alcohol-free residence halls and living spaces; 98% of the residential campuses prohibited keg deliveries to the residence halls; 87% of the institutions prohibited keg deliveries to fraternity or sorority houses; 60% of the institutions reported having fraternities and sororities and 67% of those institutions targeted Greek students with their prevention initiatives; 94% of the institutions reported having athletic programs and 59% of those institutions targeted student athletes; and 90% of the



**institutions restricted alcohol advertisements at home sporting events and 51% prohibited alcohol advertisements in the student newspaper or on campus bulletin boards. In general, the findings revealed that prevention initiatives varied with institutional type and characteristics and with the survey respondents' perceptions of the seriousness of alcohol abuse among college students.**

**The Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Studies have revealed important findings for higher education officials to consider in developing and implementing effective alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives (Wechsler, Nelson, et al., 2000). The College Alcohol Studies have found: 1) one-size-fits-all alcohol education and abuse prevention programs are ineffective, and effective programs must reflect the alcohol culture and particular conditions of the campus; 2) alcohol education alone is insufficient in reducing student alcohol abuse; 3) students are indicating greater support for tougher institutional alcohol policies; 4) binge/heavy episodic drinkers must be marginalized by minimizing their impact on other students and on institutional efforts to curb student alcohol abuse; 5) the availability and low cost of alcohol warrant discussions among higher education officials, city leaders, and bar owners and liquor purveyors; 6) binge/heavy episodic drinking is a women's health issue; 7) higher education officials must help students understand the distinction between positive and negative alcohol sharing; and 8) higher education officials must re-establish students' rights to live and learn in environments free of alcohol-related harm, and students must be encouraged to ensure that their friends are free from alcohol-related harm. Wechsler, Nelson, et al. concluded by asserting that higher education officials "should develop campaigns specifically tailored for their campuses, using**

our [College Alcohol Studies] survey data as a start, and using what they know about local problems and resources” (p. 43).

### **Social Normative Marketing**

Social normative marketing initiatives are resulting in a slight reduction in binge/heavy episodic drinking among college students by correcting the misperceptions students have about their peers’ alcohol consumption patterns (Agostinelli et al., 1995; Baer & Carney, 1993; Baer et al., 1991; Barnett et al., 1996; DeJong & Linkenbach, 1999; Haines, 1996; Haines & Spear, 1996; Meilman et al., 1997; Perkins, 1997; Perkins & Berkowitz, 1986; Perkins et al., 1999; Perkins & Wechsler, 1996; Zimmerman, 1997). Research has shown that college students perceive that their peers consume more alcohol than they actually do. Social normative marketing derives from the hypothesis that the promotion of actual versus perceived alcohol consumption patterns leads to increased visibility of actual consumption norms and results in decreased alcohol use. Because of its effectiveness, social marketing “has become a common feature of thought and action in college health” (Keeling, 2000, p. 53), and “many college administrators are now adding a social norms marketing campaign to their list of must-do [alcohol abuse] prevention activities” (DeJong & Linkenbach, 1999, p. 3).

Perkins and Berkowitz published the first research on college students’ misperceptions of their peers’ alcohol consumption patterns and the effects of these misperceptions on their own attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol (Perkins, 1997). Perkins and Berkowitz (1986) analyzed survey data from 1,116 college students at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in New York. They found that most students (66.0%) characterized their personal attitudes about alcohol as moderate, and most students (62.7%)

overestimated campus alcohol consumption norms as excessive; only 35.4% of the students perceived campus alcohol consumption norms accurately. A strong predictor of students' drinking behavior was the degree of inconsistency between students' personal attitudes about alcohol and their perceptions of campus alcohol consumption norms. Students who perceived campus norms to be similar to their own attitudes about alcohol drank more heavily than students with dissonant attitudes and perceptions related to alcohol.

In an examination of two earlier studies involving college students, Baer et al. (1991) analyzed the actual and perceived drinking norms of students' close friends and reference groups (e.g., residence hall, sorority, fraternity). The findings from both studies indicated that 1) students perceived that their close friends drank more than they themselves did, and 2) students' perceptions of their close friends' drinking norms and their reference group's drinking norms significantly exceeded their actual self-reported drinking norms.

"Perceptions of friends' drinking [were] more highly related to one's own drinking than [were] perceptions of drinking in other groups....Perceptions of friends' drinking [were] also highly related to personal drinking patterns" (pp. 584-585). The results also revealed a pattern of increasing misperceptions with increased social distance. These findings suggested that correcting such misperceptions may have a positive effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

Baer and Carney (1993) examined ratings of alcohol-related consequences by members of two fraternities and two sororities of four target individuals: themselves, their best friends, representative chapter members, and representative university students. The ratings were the frequency of alcohol-related negative consequences and the degree to which certain alcohol-related negative behaviors were considered to be problems. The data

revealed that the students perceived two targets, the representative chapter member and representative university student, as having significantly higher frequencies of alcohol-related negative behaviors and consequences. In addition, the students perceived alcohol-related negative behaviors to be more problematic if others exhibited the behaviors than if they themselves exhibited the behaviors:

Perceived rates of problems are exaggerated relative to self-report irrespective of individual drinking levels. Biases in perceived norms exist among light drinkers and quite heavy drinkers; both perceive others as drinking more than they themselves drink and as having more problems than they themselves have. (p. 59)

Baer and Carney concluded that these data reflect societal biases that heavy drinking among college students and their alcohol-related negative consequences are common and perhaps acceptable in the college setting.

Agostinelli et al. (1995) screened 568 University of New Mexico introductory psychology students, and 26 of those students who self-identified as a heavy drinker participated in the study. Twelve students received an alcohol intervention, in the form of immediate feedback by mail, on how their drinking patterns compared to gender-specific U.S. normative drinking patterns; eleven did not receive the intervention. After examining the six-week period following the alcohol intervention, the researchers found that the students who received the intervention consumed less alcohol on a weekly basis and reduced their usual levels of intoxication compared to those who did not receive the intervention.

Barnett et al. (1996) conducted a study in which four different interventions – peer norms education, values clarification, combined peer norms education and values

clarification, and no intervention -- were analyzed to determine their impact on perceived and actual alcohol consumption attitudes and patterns by college students. Five reference groups were used in the study: their close friends, other students in their living unit, the general student body, their mothers, and their fathers. The initial data revealed that "the norm education (norm-setting) intervention [was] accompanied by the largest reductions both in estimates [perceptions] of others' attitudes and in estimates of others' actual drinking" (pp. 51-52). However, data collected after four months suggested that a reduction in actual alcohol consumption patterns occurred regardless of the intervention received.

Haines and Spear (1996) conducted a study at Northern Illinois University on the effect of a media campaign intervention program on both perceptions of and actual binge drinking among college students. The media intervention resulted in an 18.5% reduction (from 69.7% in 1988 to 51.2% in 1992) in the number of students who believed binge drinking was the normative alcohol consumption pattern on campus. In addition, the media intervention resulted in an 8.8% reduction (from 43.0% in 1988 to 34.2% in 1992) in the number of students who self-reported as binge drinkers. By 1995, Haines (1996) reported that the number of students who believed binge drinking was the normative alcohol consumption pattern dropped to 42.9% and the number of students who self-reported as binge drinkers dropped to 27.7 %. In addition, alcohol-related injuries to self dropped by 31% and alcohol-related injuries to others dropped 54%. These findings supported the notion that correcting students' misperceptions of normative drinking patterns by revealing the actual norms can reduce the number of students who binge drink and who inflict injuries on themselves and others.

Perkins and Wechsler (1996) studied college students' perceptions of normative alcohol consumption and the impact of those perceptions on students' personal alcohol abuse patterns from a national survey of 17,592 students from 140 colleges and universities. They found that students' college environments accounted for only a slight degree of variation in the overall perception of normative alcohol consumption across campuses; however, students' perceptions varied significantly within each campus. Inflated perceptions of normative alcohol consumption were related significantly to greater personal alcohol abuse patterns, even after controlling for personal attitudes. The negative effect of inflated perceptions of normative alcohol consumption was greatest for students whose own attitudes about alcohol consumption were already permissive. The findings suggested that "when the norm on a specific campus is perceived by a student as quite permissive, he or she is more likely to abuse alcohol, even apart from the influence of his or her own attitude" (p. 970).

Perkins et al. (1999) examined the difference between students' self-reported alcohol and drug use patterns and students' perceptions of the frequency of their peers' use by analyzing data from 100 colleges and universities that used the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey between fall 1994 and spring 1996. The findings indicated that students overestimated the frequency of their peers' use of alcohol and drugs, both on campuses where the median report was no use or infrequent use and where the median report was more frequent use. On campuses where no alcohol use/abstinence was the reported median (more than 50% not using alcohol), only 14.1 % of the students accurately perceived no alcohol use/abstinence as "average" students' use patterns. The misperception or overestimation of average student drinking every week was most marked among students where no use/abstinence was the median reported, or actual normative use pattern on campus. These

findings contribute significantly to the literature because of the “grossly exaggerated misperceptions regarding alcohol use across campuses with very different drinking norms, from schools where actual drinking is relatively infrequent to campuses where drinking is relatively frequent” (p. 257).

The effect of a peer norms correction procedure on college students’ perceptions of alcohol consumption and actual alcohol consumption was analyzed by Peeler et al. (2000). The procedure was used to present 145 Washington State University students with the actual drinking norms and behaviors of their peers. The data revealed that the peer norms correction procedure corrected students’ misperceptions of their peers’ alcohol consumption, but it did not decrease students’ alcohol consumption. Specifically, students who received the peer norms correction intervention reported significantly lower perceptions of their peers’ alcohol consumption than did students who did not receive the intervention. However, there were no significant changes in the actual drinking behaviors of students who received the peer norms correction intervention. The findings from this study support those of Barnett et al. (1996) that students’ actual drinking behaviors may not change immediately after correction of their misperceptions of their peers’ alcohol consumption and should, therefore, be re-measured in a follow-up assessment.

Pluralistic ignorance, an alcohol-related phenomenon with theoretical underpinnings similar to those of social normative marketing, was studied by Schroeder and Prentice (1998). Pluralistic ignorance is the notion that “the majority of students believe that their peers are uniformly more comfortable with campus alcohol practices than they are” (p. 2150). Schroeder and Prentice explored the attitudinal and behavioral outcomes of exposing students’ misperceptions of their peers’ alcohol-related attitudes by examining the

effects of educating students about pluralistic ignorance on their drinking behavior. Incoming freshmen at Princeton University were assigned one of two conditions: 1) a peer-oriented discussion focusing on pluralistic ignorance; or 2) an individual-oriented discussion focusing on decision making in alcohol-related situations. Students receiving the peer-oriented condition reported drinking significantly less (consuming significantly fewer drinks each week) than students receiving the individual-oriented condition did. Men, more than women, tended to reduce the dissonance between their own comfort and perceptions of average students' comfort with alcohol practices by shifting their perceptions of average students' comfort toward their own. In addition, the peer-oriented discussion reduced students' level of perceived support for the drinking norm. The findings suggest that "educating students about pluralistic ignorance may be one component of an effective intervention strategy for reducing drinking on college campuses" (p. 2174).

Although initiatives like social normative marketing and pluralistic ignorance education have proven to be moderately effective in reducing binge/heavy episodic drinking among college students, Keeling (2000) asserted that such initiatives need to be implemented with great care. According to Keeling, initiatives with these broad prevention messages:

[run] substantial risks of causing harm – not only by misleading students, but by creating pressure on some subgroups to adopt behaviors that are actually less healthy than their current ones and reinforcing the unhealthy, but accurate, perceptions of others. Social norms programs also risk overlooking the ultimate hyper-variability of human nature. (p. 56)

"More and better research, with greater and greater rigor" (p. 56) is needed on social normative marketing and pluralistic ignorance education initiatives from other campuses.



Recognized as one of the pioneers and leading advocates in social normative marketing research, Perkins (1997) also articulated the need for additional, ongoing research on college students' misperceptions:

[Research] on misperceptions is in its infancy. We need more research to identify students most likely to follow the perceived norm, those whose perceptions are most distorted, and those who respond best to attempts at correcting their perceptions. Budget and personnel constraints may prevent some programs from spreading the word effectively to every student. We may therefore need to decide who are the most important targets for changing misperceptions. We also need to see how our efforts to combat misperceptions can be integrated with other intervention strategies already in place on many campuses. (pp. 201-202)

### **Environmental Management**

Some believe that campus-based alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, including social normative marketing strategies, by themselves are not enough to reduce alcohol abuse among college students. Research is now supporting initiatives designed to change the environmental conditions that contribute to binge/heavy episodic, harmful drinking by students (DeJong & Davidson, 2000; DeJong et al., 1998; Epstein, 1995; Gebhardt et al., 2000; Johannessen et al., 2001). These initiatives, referred to as the environmental management approach, were described by DeJong et al. (1998):

The essence of the environmental management approach...is for college officials, working in conjunction with the local community, to change the campus and community environment that contributes to AOD [alcohol and

other drug] problems. Such change can be brought about through an integrated combination of programs, policies, and public education campaigns. Stated simply, traditional approaches to prevention have tacitly accepted the world as it is and then tried to teach student as individuals how to resist its temptations. In contrast, with the environmental management approach, there is a coordinated effort to change the world – that is, the campus and community environment – in order to produce a large-scale impact on the entire campus population, including students, faculty, staff and administrators. (p. 6)

Johannessen et al. (2001) stated that the environmental management approach involves the “thoughtful analysis of the physical, social, economic, and legal environment that affects substance use, which in turn can be influenced through a combination of institutional, community, and public policy changes” (p. 589). Collectively, the physical, social, economic, and legal environments construct a set of environmental conditions, and DeJong et al. (1998) outlined five conditions upon which the environmental management approach is based:

1. The majority of students have few adult responsibilities and a great deal of unstructured free time, especially at residential colleges.
2. Alcohol is abundantly available and inexpensive.
3. There are pervasive messages that binge drinking and other drug use are a normal part of the college experience.
4. There are too few social and recreational options for students.

5. **Students who may be in trouble with alcohol or other drugs are not readily identified or referred to early intervention services. (p. 9)**

**These environmental conditions are the primary targets of environmental management initiatives.**

**Once considered in conflict with conservative legal positions related to institutional policy development and enforcement and institutional jurisdiction, environmental management transcends those traditional beliefs and focuses on campus and community coordination to establish an environment that discourages student alcohol abuse. DeJong et al. (1998) asserted that the process of creating environmental change on campus and in the community should be directed by a campus-based task force, which consists of university officials, students, alumni, parents, and various community representatives and reports directly to the president of the institution. The environmental management approach relies on presidential involvement and leadership to ensure the successful implementation of environmental change strategies.**

**As part of the environmental management approach, Epstein (1995) offered strategies to assist colleges and universities in their efforts to coordinate alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives with the local community. The five strategies included enlisting local community support, coordinating university and community prevention efforts, working with local businesses, being creative about prevention (e.g., student/peer drama, music, and dance performances), and fashioning their own strategy (e.g., allowing alcohol-related community-based groups to use campus facilities and discontinuing practices that the local community finds objectionable like transporting students to and from bars). Epstein concluded that good faith collaboration between the university and local community produces outcomes that are**

mutually beneficial to both “town and gown” and an environment that is conducive to reducing student alcohol abuse.

The environmental management approach not only is about creating change, it is about building and maintaining long-term support to sustain the change in environmental conditions. DeJong and Davidson (2000) identified eight common characteristics of alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives that endure the test of time:

1. Collaboration within the college community
2. Strong commitment from top school administrators
3. An established long-range plan
4. Objectives tied to the college’s mission
5. Networking outside the college community
6. A focus on building institutional capacity
7. A system of program accountability
8. Strategic use of public relations (p. 2)

In addition, identifying alternative sources of funding – direct funding, in-kind goods/ services, private/corporate/foundation grants, student fees, alumni donations, and parent contributions – is key to maintaining an alcohol education and abuse prevention program that can sustain the changes in the environmental conditions.

Gebhardt et al. (2000) analyzed an environmental management case study involving a consortium of colleges and universities and community officials and organizations from the greater Albany, New York area and reported results for the State University of New York at Albany (SUNY Albany). Coordinated by the Albany Committee on University and Community Relations, the environmental management initiatives included tightening

enforcement of greater Albany area alcohol-related laws and ordinances, implementing a safety-awareness campaign for students living off-campus in the Albany area, and establishing an alcohol advertising and beverage service agreement with Albany area bar owners and alcohol purveyors. The initiatives resulted in a decrease in SUNY Albany student alcohol-related problems in the community – a decrease in off-campus student noise ordinance violations (from 40 in 1992-93 to 7 in 1998-99) and a decrease in calls to the SUNY Albany complaint hotline for reporting off-campus student alcohol-related problems (from 37 in 1992-93 to 10 in 1998-99). Given stricter enforcement, alcohol-related arrests of SUNY Albany students increased from 14 in 1992-93 to 35 in 1998-99, peaking at 84 arrests in 1997-98. Gebhardt et al. concluded environmental management has “promise as an effective means of preventing alcohol-related problems at the college level” (pp. 213-214).

An environmental management case study was examined at the University of Arizona, focusing on changes in football, specifically Homecoming pre-game activities (Johannessen et al., 2001). Concerned about its unclear and inconsistent alcohol policy and poor enforcement, the University of Arizona implemented “a new set of alcohol control policies that would be manageable, enforceable, and visible and that would better express existing campus and community norms of moderate and unharmed alcohol consumption” (pp. 588-589). In 1994, alcohol advertising and sponsorships were banned on campus (except in the student newspaper) and fraternities were required to register their parties with the dean of students’ office and campus police. In 1995, several new policies were implemented and enforcement was tightened: 1) game-day tents required two bartenders and only they could dispense alcohol; 2) alcohol service was restricted to certain areas, open kegs were banned, and identification was required; 3) liability insurance was required; 4) large

open displays of alcohol were discouraged; and 5) no alcohol consumption or displays were permitted on Homecoming floats. The results from 1994 to 1995 were positive – fewer tents (from 36 to 22), no kegs (from 1-12 to 0), more tents with food and non-alcoholic beverages (from 55.6% with food and 22.2% with alternative beverages to 64.2% and 59.3%, respectively). Over the course of the 1994 and 1995 football seasons, neighborhood complaints decreased (from 15 to 9) and law enforcement actions decreased (from 95 to 80). The results of this study remained consistent through 1998, except the data on law enforcement actions were inconsistent.

### **Increased Student Involvement**

Although student involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives in and of itself is not new, the level of their involvement and participation is expanding. Effective campus-based alcohol education and abuse prevention programs promote and facilitate student engagement at every level (Edwards & Leonard, 1994; HEC, 1997; HEC, 1998; NIAAA, 2002). In support of this position, The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1998) issued a monograph on student leadership in alcohol and other drug prevention initiatives, advocating expanded involvement opportunities for students in addition to their traditional roles as peer educators:

Students have traditionally been involved in AOD [alcohol and other drug] prevention efforts as peer educators in formal programs that have the goal of changing the awareness and knowledge of other students. However, student involvement in building campus and community coalitions; developing policies; and planning, implementing, and evaluating programs can make these prevention strategies come alive for other students. Participation in

these efforts can help students develop a sense of ownership of prevention activities and lead to wider campus support. Involving students in designing and implementing an AOD program can also more effectively tailor the strategy to an individual campus....Lastly, the opinions of highly visible student leaders can have a significant impact on the campus environment and, in particular, on social norms. (p. 1)

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (2002) also stated that students are critical to the successful development and implementation of campus alcohol policies and abuse prevention initiatives and that their involvement leads to increased campus-wide ownership in the policies and initiatives.

An additional benefit of broader student involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives is students' ability to tear down negative and rebuild positive campus artifacts – rituals, folklore, traditions, and cultures – that affect students' attitudes and behaviors to alcohol (Edwards & Leonard, 1994). "Campus legends and lore...help define what is perceived as acceptable and admired use of alcohol and other drugs" (p. 48). By serving on university and community alcohol coalitions and policy-making groups, students can provide direct, valuable information on understanding alcohol-related campus artifacts from a student perspective, accessing and influencing the student subcultures that preserve the artifacts, and building new artifacts. In addition to traditional student leaders, Edwards and Leonard recommended that students who typically are not perceived as campus leaders (e.g., intramural team captains, student union employees, and student staff from the campus television and radio stations) can bring unique, important perspectives to discussions on alcohol-related issues in general and campus artifacts in particular. Students and university

and community officials must work collectively to redesign the campus artifacts that negatively affect college students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

### **Increased Faculty Involvement**

Research on increased faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives has yielded conflicting findings; faculty are critical to education and prevention initiatives, but are they willing or prepared to get involved (Baker & Broek, 1995; HEC, 1999; Milgram & Anderson, 1996; Wadsworth et al., 1994)? The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1999) cited data from the Core Institute's Faculty and Staff Environmental Alcohol and Other Drug Survey completed by 5,583 faculty and staff between 1994 and 1997. From the Faculty Survey, 64% of the respondents were concerned about alcohol and other drug (AOD) use on campus, and 90% believed higher education institutions should be engaged in AOD prevention initiatives. Eighty-seven percent of the faculty agreed AOD abuse negatively impacted students' personal lives, and 92% agreed AOD abuse negatively impacted students' academic lives. Yet, 78% did not describe themselves as "actively involved" in AOD initiatives, and 66% had never provided students with AOD information. Additional findings revealed that faculty are willing to be more involved in AOD initiatives. Eighty-five percent of the faculty reported they would refer students for AOD services if they knew how; 60% would attend a training workshop on AOD initiatives; and 40% would like to be more involved in AOD initiatives on campus.

Although the data on faculty concern about AOD issues conflicted with the data on faculty involvement in AOD initiatives, it appears faculty are willing to become more involved. Despite the perceptions of some that faculty involvement in alcohol education and



abuse prevention initiatives is peripheral to the traditional faculty role, faculty are critical to the success of prevention efforts (HEC, 1999):

Faculty have a substantial impact on the campus culture, particularly since they often remain at a college longer than administrators and students. By taking a leadership role in the faculty senate or a campus task force, evaluating ongoing prevention initiatives, or addressing AOD [alcohol and other drug] issues in the classroom, faculty can play an essential role in AOD prevention on their campuses and in the local communities. (p. 1)

Possible faculty involvement opportunities include: 1) speaking out about AOD issues on campus with students; 2) participating in the Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Regulations mandatory biennial review process; 3) participating in the campus and/or community alcohol task force(s); 4) working with community-based alcohol abuse prevention programs; 5) making connections with students beyond the classroom; 6) infusing alcohol education and abuse prevention issues into the curriculum; 7) incorporating alcohol-related service learning opportunities into course work; and 8) referring students who display alcohol-related problems to the appropriate campus resources.

Milgram and Anderson (1996) examined effective campus-based alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives and developed five key questions to guide the design, implementation, and evaluation an effective institution-wide alcohol abuse prevention program. One of them speaks directly to faculty support: "Is a comprehensive alcohol policy in place for the campus community? If so, is it supported by staff, alumni, faculty [emphasis added], and students?" (p. 24). Specifically, Milgram and Anderson asserted that effective institution-wide alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives involve faculty directly in

the development and dissemination of the institutional philosophy and policies on alcohol. Faculty training programs on alcohol-related topics, curriculum infusion of alcohol education and abuse prevention material, and curricula blended with other alcohol and health and safety issues (e.g., drunk driving, sexual assault) also were identified as opportunities to increase faculty awareness and support of alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives.

Curriculum infusion, an alcohol education and abuse prevention strategy based on weaving prevention material into an existing course, was advocated by Wadsworth et al. (1994). They contended that curriculum infusion is an effective prevention strategy because it enables students to process the effects of alcohol and drug abuse to their own lives in a naturalistic way in the classroom setting. Wadsworth et al. provided the following example of curriculum infusion:

Sally Smith is a typical first-year student at a residential college. In her introductory psychology course, she gathers information about why and how people use substances at various stages in the life cycle. In her introductory speech communication course, she reads and analyzes a case study about a student who abuses alcohol on campus and comes before the student disciplinary board for a hearing. In the unit on statistics in her mathematics course, she analyzes the data from the student needs assessment as one of her assignments. The Guerrilla Theater Prevention Troupe presents skits to her sorority on acquaintance rape, alcohol use, and AIDS. In her second semester, Sally becomes interested in student activities and participates in a student activities leadership training workshop where she learns leadership and communication skills. (pp. 57-58)

Wadsworth et al. (1994) suggested that the key to effective curriculum infusion is also one of its greatest challenges – getting faculty and student affairs professionals to “build bridges” and to work collaboratively. To overcome this and other challenges, Wadsworth et al. proposed five key implementation steps to ensure successful curriculum infusion:

1) identify a respected faculty member to serve as curriculum infusion coordinator; 2) select target courses to reach the greatest number of students possible; 3) recruit respected faculty who are opinion leaders among the faculty and provide participation incentives that are valued by faculty; 4) build the capacity of the faculty to design curriculum infusion modules through printed materials and workshops; and 5) provide long-term follow through and support to the module developers.

Regardless of the benefits of curriculum infusion, are faculty actually interested, willing, and/or prepared to involve themselves with curriculum infusion and other alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives? Some say no. Baker and Broek (1995) surveyed approximately 860 tenure-track faculty at a large public Midwestern university about their 1) observations of the effects of alcohol and drug use in the classroom, 2) knowledge of the university’s alcohol and drug policies and intervention services, 3) personal involvement in alcohol and drug prevention, and 4) perception of students’ alcohol and drug use patterns; 394 surveys were returned. Baker and Broek found that although 85% of the respondents agreed alcohol and drug abuse negatively affects students’ academic performance, 52% were not concerned with the level of alcohol and drug use among students. Related to faculty interest, willingness, and preparation, many faculty were not prepared to become involved personally in student drug abuse intervention programs. Only six percent considered themselves involved actively in abuse prevention efforts, and only nine percent had attended

an alcohol or drug abuse workshop or seminar. In addition, the majority of faculty were not interested in infusing alcohol and drug prevention material into their courses. However, 55% of the respondents indicated interest in additional information on the subject via campus mail, suggesting perhaps “hope” for increased faculty involvement in the future.

### **Parental Notification**

There are early indications that parental notification policies, as an initiative to reduce alcohol abuse among college students, are increasing both in number and effectiveness (Epstein, 1999b; Palmer, Lohman, Gehring, Carlson, & Garrett, 2001; Reisberg, 1998, 2001). Parental notification surfaced as one piece of a large package of federal education legislation enacted during the 105<sup>th</sup> United States Congressional Session to assist higher education institutions in the area of alcohol education and abuse prevention. The parental notification piece is Higher Education Amendments Section 952. Epstein (1999a) summarized Section 952, Alcohol or Drug Possession Disclosure, of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 1998. Section 952:

authorizes [institutions of higher education] to disclose to parents and guardians violations of institutional policies or rules in addition to local, state, and federal laws governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance if the student is under 21 and if the [institution of higher education] determines that the student has committed a violation with respect to such use or possession. (p. 4)

Previous legislation only permitted the disclosure of local, state, or federal law violations regarding the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance. This legislation does not supersede any state law that prohibits an institution from disclosing

information; it does not forbid, nor does it require, an institution to disclose information to parents.

Section 952 widened the door for institutional officials to notify parents of their students' alcohol-related violations on and off campus, and the lobbying efforts of Jeffrey Levy, father of a Radford University student killed by a drunk driver in 1998, have been credited for the new legislation (Epstein, 1999b). "Levy encouraged the [Virginia Attorney General's] task force to act forcefully with respect to parental notification. The members of the task force listened" (p. 1). Anecdotal data from the State of Virginia and Radford University, in particular, indicate that "high risk drinking may be declining" (p. 6).

Although there is little published research and scholarly opinion on parental notification policies, some developing research indicates parental notification may have a positive effect on students' alcohol-related attitudes and behaviors. Reisberg (1998) interviewed officials at the University of Delaware, one of the first higher education institutions to implement a parental notification policy. University of Delaware officials began notifying parents of their students' alcohol violations in Fall 1997, before Section 952 of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 1998 became effective on October 1, 1998. Letters were sent to the parents of 1,414 students who had committed one or more alcohol or drug violations. As a result, the students' recidivism rate dropped significantly from 1996-97 to 1997-98. In 1996-96, before the parental notification policy was implemented, more than 50% of first-time alcohol offenders were caught a second time; after the policy was implemented in 1997-98, fewer than 25% were caught a second time.

In 1998, Virginia Tech University and Radford University implemented parental notification policies, notifying parents of students who commit one major alcohol violation

or two minor violations (Reisberg, 1998). The difference between Virginia Tech's and Radford's notification policies was that Radford's applied only to freshmen who were financially dependent on their parents. Another significant difference related to student support. At Radford, students developed the idea and student government backed the policy; at Virginia Tech, neither occurred. Regardless of student buy-in, Virginia Tech made the decision to cast their notification net wider. Effective Spring 1999, parents of any underage student responsible for an alcohol or drug violation, on or off campus, will be notified (Epstein, 1999b).

More recently, Palmer et al. (2001) surveyed campus judicial affairs officers at 189 higher education institutions on their institutional responses to Section 952 of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 1998. They found that 44% of those surveyed had official parental notification policies in place prior to January 2000; 15% did not have official parental notification policies, but as a practice, did notify parents; and 25% were considering formally implementing notification policies. In addition, the study examined the effects of parental notification policies on the number of alcohol violations disclosed to institutional judicial officers. Institutions with parental notification policies in effect for at least one semester experienced "more favorable than unfavorable effects on the number of alcohol violations on campus" (p. 382), with 52% of the institutions reporting a reduction or slight reduction in alcohol violations. The study also revealed that parents of students attending both private and public institutions were highly supportive of parental notification policies.

With the research suggesting that these alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives are having only a moderately positive impact on the problem of alcohol abuse among college students, can more be done to combat this pervasive problem? The final

section of this literature review focuses on one of the conclusions from Involving Colleges: Successful Approaches to Fostering Student Learning and Development Outside the Classroom and reveals an important implication about the relationship between clear, congruent university philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

#### **Institutional Congruence and Student Behavior: An Involving Colleges Conclusion**

With the research suggesting that alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives are having only a moderately positive impact on the problem of alcohol abuse among college students, what more can be done to combat this pervasive problem? Can higher education institutions have a greater positive impact on the problem of alcohol abuse among college students by identifying elements of the college community that contribute to mixed messages about alcohol, as recommended by The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1997) Presidents Leadership Group? Can higher education institutions then develop strategies to mitigate these elements? Is it possible for higher education institutions to have a greater positive impact on the problem of alcohol abuse among college students by enhancing both the congruence of their philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and the congruence among institutional officials and students in their understanding and application of them? Does alcohol-related institutional congruence and student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development have an effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol?

Answers to these questions may lie in Involving Colleges: Successful Approaches to Fostering Student Learning and Development Outside the Classroom (Kuh et al., 1991). Kuh et al. investigated the research question: Do students who are involved actively in both

academic and out-of-class activities gain more from the college experience than those who are not so involved? The purposes of the study were to 1) understand institutional environments that promote student learning and personal development, 2) describe the factors and conditions that characterize colleges and universities that provide students with unusually rich opportunities for out-of-class learning and personal development, and 3) transcend their participants' constructions to provide a theory-based framework for administrators, faculty members, and others to examine their own campuses and identify ways to enhance students' out-of-class learning.

Kuh et al. used an expert nomination process to identify "colleges and universities reputed to provide high-quality out-of-class experiences for undergraduates" (p. 23). Each expert could nominate a maximum of five institutions in each of five categories: 1) small residential (<5,000 students); 2) large residential (>5,000); 3) urban (predominately commuting and part-time students); 4) single-sex; and 5) historically Black. Those institutions receiving two or more nominations were resubmitted to the experts for another round of selection. Before final selections, the research team interviewed the expert nominators to learn more about their selection criteria. In the end, 14 institutions were selected to participate in the study.

Data were collected utilizing qualitative research methods – personal interviews, focus groups, formal and informal observations, and document analysis. A total of 1,295 individuals were interviewed from the 14 institutions. The research team observed formal and informal programs, events, and activities that occurred during the campus visits. Documents were analyzed, both before and during the site-visit, including institutional histories, mission and goal statements, policy handbooks, admissions information and



viewbooks, student organization recruitment brochures, data about student characteristics, and public relations videos.

Although Involving Colleges is a macro-level look at general student attitudes and behaviors and student learning and personal development in and out of the classroom, are there implications from Involving Colleges for a micro-level look at students' attitudes and behaviors and their learning and personal development related to alcohol? Are any of its findings, conclusions, or recommendations transferable to an alcohol-specific context? If so, Involving Colleges may reveal an important implication for higher education institutions about the relationship between clear, congruent philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

In general, the findings from Involving Colleges revealed that "a high level of student participation in educationally purposeful activities can be promoted if these activities, and the policies and practices that support them, are compatible with the institution's mission, philosophy, and culture" (p. 341). In particular, Conclusion 1 and its first recommendation appear to be transferable to an alcohol-specific context and this study on the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol:

*Conclusion 1: Institutions that have a clear mission, kept plainly in view, encourage involvement. A clear, coherent mission gives direction to student learning and minimizes confusion and uncertainty about what the institution is and aspires to be [emphasis added]. Constant scrutiny is required, however, to keep the institutional mission appropriate within its social and political contexts and meaningful to community members. Goals for what and how*

students learn are examined, and reexamined, to remain compatible with the institutional mission. Student behavior is assessed and, if necessary, challenged in light of the mission and philosophy. (pp. 341-342)

*Recommendation 1: All members of the campus community should be familiar with and committed to the institution's mission and philosophy.* At Involving Colleges, the most powerful factor in focusing student behavior is the institution's mission and philosophy [emphasis added]. The mission should be communicated clearly and consistently in institutional publications, at gatherings of [university] community members, and in the process of welcoming newcomers. Socialization activities send powerful messages about what the institution stands for and create lasting expectations for new (or prospective) students, faculty, and staff. (p. 342)

If "a clear, coherent mission gives direction to student learning" how does an unclear, incoherent mission affect student learning? Framed within an alcohol-specific context, if a clear, congruent philosophy on alcohol gives direction to student learning and personal development related to alcohol, how does an unclear, incongruent philosophy on alcohol affect student learning and personal development related to alcohol? If "the most powerful factor in focusing student behavior is the institution's mission and philosophy," how does an unclear, incongruent mission and philosophy affect student behavior? Framed within an alcohol-specific context, if the most powerful factor in focusing students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol is the institution's philosophy on alcohol, how does an unclear, incongruent philosophy on alcohol affect students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol?

**This study on the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol addresses these questions.**

### **Chapter Summary**

**Alcohol abuse among college students is having a profound impact on American higher education. The Harvard School of Public Health 2001 College Alcohol Study revealed no significant change in the overall binge/heavy episodic drinking rate among college students from 1993 to 2001, remaining constant at approximately 44% (Wechsler et al., 2002). Fraternity and sorority members, especially fraternity men, have been found to be particularly prone to binge/heavy episodic drinking and other alcohol-related problems. Residence in a fraternity or sorority house has been identified as the number one predictor of binge/heavy episodic drinking among college students.**

**Hingson et al. (2002) found that an estimated 1,400 college students die each year from alcohol-related causes, including motor vehicle accidents, and nearly 500,000 students are injured while under the influence of alcohol. Furthermore, Hingson et al. found that more than 600,000 college students are assaulted each year by other students who have been drinking, and over 70,000 students are victims of sexual assault or date rape, with alcohol contributing to the crimes.**

**Many college and university presidents have identified student alcohol abuse as one of the most serious threats to higher education, and their concerns have translated into action. Since the mid-1990s, the level of presidential involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives has increased as a result of several high-profile alcohol-related student deaths and several national studies on college student drinking. Boards of**

Trustees also have begun to express their concerns about the problem of student alcohol abuse.

Given the magnitude of this problem, higher education institutions have implemented a number of alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. Early campus-based alcohol education and abuse prevention programs have had limited positive effects on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol; more recent initiatives like social normative marketing and environmental management are having moderately positive effects. Increased student and faculty involvement in alcohol abuse prevention initiatives and parental notification of student alcohol violations also have been cited as strategies to reduce alcohol abuse among college students.

With alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives having only a moderately positive impact on the problem of alcohol abuse among college students, can more be done to combat this pervasive problem? Can higher education institutions identify elements of the college community that contribute to mixed messages about alcohol and then develop strategies to mitigate these elements? Does alcohol-related institutional congruence and student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development have an effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol? One of the conclusions from Involving Colleges addresses those very questions by revealing an important implication about the relationship between clear, congruent university philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

Chapter Three will focus on the conceptual framework for this study through an explanation of the overall research approach and rationale and the specific research design and methodology that underpinned this study. In Chapter Three, the role of the researcher,

**the selection and description of the research site and participants, and the data collection and analysis strategies will be discussed along with the research procedures that were used to enhance the trustworthiness features of this study. The pilot study that was used to inform and guide the ongoing development of this study also will be reviewed.**

### **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS**

The purpose of this study was to examine the research participants' perceptions and constructions of the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, and the relationship between student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Given this focus, the overall research approach was based on qualitative research methods to produce data in the form of words and nuances (Krathwohl, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). An instrumental case study prototype (Berg, 1998) was selected as the research design to provide a better understanding of the research focus with the actual case, the research site, serving as a backdrop.

The research site selected for this study was a large, state-assisted Midwestern Doctoral/Research University – Extensive institution (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2000 Ed.). Status sampling and snowball sampling techniques (Dobbert, 1982; Krathwohl, 1998) were utilized to identify 33 research participants from three university constituencies – administrator (12), faculty (9), and student (12) – for personal interviews. A semi-structured interview format (Fontana & Frey, 1994) was selected for the participant interviews, and a participant-construct instrument (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) was used for the interview questions.

Personal interviews with the 33 research participants provided the primary data for this study; document analysis provided secondary data. The data were fractured, coded, and analyzed (Krathwohl, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Yin, 1994) using four major categories, three of which corresponded directly with the three overarching research questions. The data were analyzed using within-constituency and cross-constituency

analyses. Saturation of categories, emergence of regularities, and overextension criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were used to determine that the iterations of collecting, categorizing, and analyzing data had reached points of diminishing return and logical conclusion. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability features (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were incorporated to enhance the trustworthiness of this study.

### **Overall Research Approach and Rationale**

This study was conducted within the naturalistic, qualitative research paradigm, as opposed to the positivistic, quantitative research paradigm. According to Krathwohl (1998), qualitative research “describes phenomena in words instead of numbers or measures and usually uses [analytic] induction to ascertain what is important in phenomena” (p. 690). In contrast, quantitative research “describes phenomena in numbers and measures instead of words; the focus of the research is usually predetermined and deduced from prior research” (p. 690). Analytic induction was central to this study, as it is to other naturalistic, qualitative research, because it entails “finding commonalities and regularities in qualitative data, seeking their explanation, and finding other situations in which to test the generality of that explanation” (p. 680).

Constructivist qualitative research methods – personal interviews and document analysis – were utilized because they produce data in the form of words and nuances, which allow for inductive data analysis (Krathwohl, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Constructivist qualitative methods were selected over traditional social science survey methods because a traditional survey design would have been too restrictive for the research participants and would have imposed predetermined limits on the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Personal interviews and document analysis enable researchers to identify, understand, and interpret the

interconnected institutional dynamics that influence students' out-of-class experiences (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). In addition, the research methods selected for this study required this researcher to be familiar not only with the appropriate methodology, but also with the phenomena under study (Kuh et al., 1991).

### **Research Design**

Given the purpose of this study, an instrumental case study prototype was selected as the research design. Instrumental case studies (Berg, 1998) are cases or contexts that are examined to provide a better understanding and greater meaning into a particular issue or problem, with the actual case or context serving as a backdrop for the primary focus – the issue or problem:

Instrumental case studies often are investigated in depth, and all of its aspects and activities are detailed, but not simply to elaborate the case per se. Instead, the intention is to assist the researcher to better understand some external theoretical question or problem. Instrumental case studies may or may not be viewed as typical of other cases. However, the choice of a particular case for study is made because the investigator believes that his or her understanding about some other research interest will be advanced. (p. 216)

This study was designed so data could be collected and analyzed contemporaneously, with initial data guiding the collection and interpretation of subsequent data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1984). The information gathered from the initial participant interviews was used to focus and guide the subsequent interviews, allowing the interviews to become semi-structured (Fontana & Frey, 1994). As additional data were collected and as this researcher became more familiar with the nuances of the university and



more experienced with the data collection methods, the interview questions became more focused.

Status sampling and snowball sampling research strategies (Dobbert, 1982; Krathwohl, 1998) were utilized to identify the research participants. All of the administrator participants were identified using status sampling; the faculty and student participants were identified using both status and snowball sampling. Status sampling involved interviewing individuals who, by their roles and responsibilities, have knowledge of and perspectives on the phenomena being studied. The administrator status sample, identified by generic title to protect the participants' confidentiality and the university's anonymity, included the provost, senior student affairs officer, director of residence life, director of fraternity and sorority life, director of judicial affairs, director of campus safety, director of counseling services, director of health education, director of student legal services, director of new student programs, coordinator of the university's social normative marketing campaign, and coordinator of the university's alcohol-free, alternative social program (Mascot Nights).

The faculty status sample, again identified by generic title to protect the participants' confidentiality and the university's anonymity, included two academic deans with faculty assignments, a professor of education and history, an associate professor of social welfare, and an assistant professor of health, sport and exercise sciences. The student status sample included the presidents, respectively, of the student body, the residence hall association, the on-campus cooperative living association, the student union programming board, the interfraternity council, and the panhellenic council, as well as the coordinator of GAMMA and an executive officer of the non-traditional student organization.

Snowball sampling, also known as chain referral sampling (Krathwohl, 1998), was used to identify the remaining faculty and student participants. Snowball sampling is “the identification of the members of a group by asking individuals who would be expected to know the members to identify them, continuing until no new information is being obtained” (p. 692). For example, potential faculty and student participants were identified by asking the faculty and student participants with whom I had completed interviews to identify their peers who might be willing to participate in this study.

In addition, the principle of inclusion (Miles & Huberman, 1984) guided this researcher’s efforts to gather as much information as possible from a variety of participant perspectives. For example, senior-, mid-, and entry-level administrators were interviewed, some with as many as 30 years of institutional history and others with as few as two years. Tenured faculty and faculty leaders were interviewed from a variety of academic disciplines, as well as faculty members who were not tenured, who were not in leadership roles, and who did not self-identify as leaders among the faculty. In addition, the presidents of major student organizations and other student leaders were interviewed, as well as students who were not involved in student life activities and who did not self-identify as leaders among their peers.

### **Researcher Role**

The role of the researcher is critical in qualitative research, and this researcher’s role was no different in this study. Maxwell (1996) discussed the researcher role in relation to the research design:

In qualitative studies, the researcher is the instrument of the research, and the research relationship is the means by which the research gets done.

This relationship has an effect not only on the participants in the study, but on other parts of the research design....In particular, the research relationship you establish can facilitate or hinder other components of the research design such as sampling and data collection methods. (pp. 66-67)

LeCompte and Preissle (1993) also discussed the role of the researcher in ethnography, using the phraseology, "Researcher-as-Instrument" (p. 91). Similar to Maxwell (1996), LeCompte and Preissle correlated the involvement of the researcher with the quality of the data:

The roles the researcher assumes within the culture and the researcher's identity and experience are critical to the scientific merit of the study. They are part of the research design because researchers are dependent on and involved with participants over a sustained period of time and in ways far more intimate and complex than simply filling out questionnaires....To the extent that they become a part of the community and have the same experiences as natives do, the quality of their data is improved. (p. 92)

Given the central role of the researcher in qualitative research designs, it is imperative that 1) researchers openly and expressly acknowledge their biases for the readers, and 2) readers of qualitative research understand that researcher biases will impact the study (Altheide & Johnson, 1994; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The following is the acknowledgment of this researcher's role and biases in this study.

For this study, I served as researcher and interviewer, and research practitioner. I have been an administrator in higher education for 17 years. In that time, I have maintained direct or indirect responsibility for fraternity and sorority affairs, student organization

advisement, leadership development, and alcohol education. Specifically, I have been involved with alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives since beginning my graduate education in 1984. I wrote, administered, and evaluated an alcohol education and risk management grant from 1994 to 2000. I also have presented at local, regional, and national conferences on alcohol-related topics. This experience provided the professional “lens” from which I studied the research phenomena. However, this “lens” also required the acknowledgment of my researcher biases as I collected, analyzed, and interpreted the data.

Another professional perspective was derived from my former role as an instructor of an extended orientation seminar for first-year students, nearly all of whom were freshmen. I taught a section of this course for three consecutive fall semesters. A basic curricular objective of the course was to provide students with information to assist them in making safe and healthy choices while at college, both on and off campus. To achieve that aim, guest lecturers from various university departments – health education, campus safety, student legal services, residence life, and fraternity and sorority life – spoke to the class each semester; inevitably, the topic of alcohol was discussed.

It was from these different departmental presentations that I began to question the university’s alcohol-related institutional congruence, or at least students’ perceptions of it. The health education presentation would emphasize understanding the physiological effects of alcohol, knowing “when to say when,” and helping a friend who appears to be too intoxicated. Campus safety officials would explain to the students, among other things, that if they drink too much and choose to drive home, they should avoid certain routes and streets. The student legal services presentation would focus on the services available to students

should they receive a minor in possession charge or encounter other legal problems related to alcohol or underage drinking. The residence life staff would present why and how they “toe the line” on the alcohol policy in the residence halls. The fraternity and sorority life staff would discuss the changing alcohol culture of the fraternity and sorority community, as well as specific topics such as alcohol-free fraternity housing and alcohol and risk management policies. Again, the audience was predominantly freshmen, the overwhelming majority of whom were not of legal drinking age.

Overall, do you know what I think the students heard? Based on student reactions and conversations over the years, my interpretation of what students heard follows:

Okay, let’s see...The health education people are telling us how to keep from getting sick or dying from alcohol poisoning *when* we’ve had too much to drink. The campus police are telling us which streets to avoid on our way home *when* we’ve had too much to drink. The student legal services people can help us get out of legal trouble *when* we’ve had too much to drink. And the residence life and Greek life staffs are telling us not to drink. Don’t drink? Yah, right! Who do they think they are?

I assert that the intended messages from the various presenters were, in effect, the appropriate messages given the nature of their work and functions of their departments. I also assert, however, that the students were not able to delineate those messages. I do not believe they were able to reason consciously or cogently that it makes sense that the student legal services staff, given the nature of their role and department, say one thing and the residence life staff, given the nature of their role and department, say another. I think the

students heard a collection of independent perspectives on and mixed messages about the university's philosophy and policies related to alcohol.

The final perspective I brought to the researcher role was years of conversations and debates in which students and I have discussed and argued the appropriateness of allowing alcohol at certain university events (e.g., football tailgates on campus property) and in certain locations (e.g., the President's home on campus property) and not at others (e.g., on-campus residence hall rooms of students of legal drinking age or married, non-traditional student housing units). All of the fundamental logic and cogent reasoning I could muster in defense of the university's philosophy and policies related to alcohol never seemed to satisfy the students' strong feelings about hypocrisy, double standards, and mixed messages.

Admittedly, there were those students with whom no amount of reason would have mattered, but there were other students with whom solid reasoning and persuasive arguments would have mattered. Still, it always became an argument that was difficult to win and, more interestingly, an argument I was uncertain I wanted to pursue. Moreover, when the students identified such cases of alcohol-related institutional incongruence, I found myself wanting to empathize with them. Yet, as an institution, we would ask ourselves why the students weren't "getting it" related to alcohol. I wasn't quite certain we "had it" to give them.

### **Pilot Study**

A pilot study for this dissertation research study was conducted at the conclusion of the 2001 spring semester, May 15-22, at a small, Midwestern, independent residential liberal arts institution, with a Baccalaureate College – Liberal Arts Carnegie Classification (2000 Ed.). A pilot study, or pilot testing as termed by Krathwohl (1998), is "trying out an instrument or a procedure to determine problems before the actual study is begun" (p. 689).

Similar to Krathwohl, Maxwell (1996) asserted that a pilot study is used to test ideas and methods and to explore the implications associated with them. In particular, Maxwell advocated the use of pilot studies in qualitative research:

There is one particular use that pilot studies have in qualitative research, which prior research *can* also accomplish but is much less likely to. This use is to generate an understanding of the concepts and theories held by those people you are studying....[A pilot study] provides you with an understanding of the meaning that these phenomena and events have for the actors who are involved in them, and the perspectives that inform their actions. In a qualitative study, these meanings and perspectives should constitute a key component of your theory...not simply a source of theoretical insights and building blocks for the latter. (p. 45)

Entry for the pilot study was negotiated with the associate dean of students, with formal approval to conduct the study from the president and senior student affairs officer of the university. The primary data source for the pilot study was personal interviews with 20 research participants – 12 administrators, 2 faculty, and 6 students. The interviews, which lasted approximately 60 to 90 minutes, were tape-recorded and verbatim transcripts were made of each interview. Document analysis provided secondary data for the study.

The pilot study proved extremely beneficial, as it provided the opportunity to field-test the overall research approach and methodology for this dissertation research study, specifically the appropriateness of the participant selection and sampling procedures, data collection and analysis techniques, and interview question content and interview length. In addition, the pilot study gave this researcher a trial opportunity to make logical data

connections and inferences in compiling the results of the study and in formulating conclusions based on those results.

Of particular interest, two significant issues surfaced in the pilot study that informed the ongoing development of this study: 1) the majority of participants articulated strong personal needs for the confidentiality of their comments to be protected; and 2) the majority of participants were highly sensitive to, and in many cases, visibly anxious about the subject in general (alcohol) and the phenomenon in particular (alcohol-related institutional congruence). These two issues remained paramount through the completion of each stage of the pilot study and this dissertation research study.

A third issue that surfaced resulted in rewording and restating some of the interview questions. The issue was the use of the word, *administrative*. Some of the interview questions for the pilot study referred to the university's *administrative* philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol. On several occasions, some participants asked for a definition or clarification of *administrative*. Others asked if faculty and student philosophies, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol were part of the study. Thus, it became evident that the participants were attempting to differentiate among administrator, faculty, and student philosophies, policies, programs, and practices. That was not the intention of the interview questions nor was it the research focus of the pilot study. As with this dissertation research study, the research focus was to develop a greater understanding of the participants' perceptions and constructions of the congruence among the *university's* philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and the congruence among administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and



application of the *university's* philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol (i.e., alcohol-related institutional congruence).

### **Site Selection and Description**

The research site selected for this study was a large, state-assisted Midwestern Doctoral/Research University – Extensive institution. According to The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (2000 Ed.), a Doctoral/Research University – Extensive is an institution “conferring a total of at least 50 doctorates per year across at least 15 fields” (p. 2). This research site was selected based on its potential for entry and access resulting from this researcher’s professional relationship with the university’s administrative leadership team. Given the sensitive nature of this study’s research focus, one of the terms of the research agreement was that no additional information, beyond that which has been provided, would be used to describe either the university or the rationale behind its selection as the research site.

Entry for this study was negotiated with the university’s senior student affairs officer. After initial e-mail exchanges and telephone conversations, a formal request to conduct research at the university was submitted to the senior student affairs officer (*See Appendix A – Formal Research Request*). Upon review of the request, the senior student affairs officer granted formal approval on behalf of the university administration to use the university as the research site. Approval also was secured from this researcher’s major professor, Dr. Larry H. Ebbers, and program of study committee, as well as from the Iowa State University (ISU) Human Subjects Research Office and Institutional Review Board (*See Appendix B – Human Subjects Research Approval*). In addition, the research site’s human subjects committee coordinator was contacted directly about this study, and the coordinator confirmed that, given

approval from the ISU Human Subjects Research Office, no action or approval was needed from the research site's human subjects committee. A copy of the ISU Human Subjects Research Approval was forwarded to the research site's human subjects committee coordinator.

### **Participant Selection and Description**

As mentioned previously, status sampling and snowball sampling research strategies (Dobbert, 1982; Krathwohl, 1998) were utilized to identify the participants in this study. The initial participants were selected by status sampling, with the assistance of the research site's senior student affairs officer. These participants were chosen based on their direct involvement in or close association with the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. A letter was sent to the initial participants that 1) introduced the researcher and the purpose of the study, 2) described the study and their role as research participants, 3) explained why the university was selected as the research site, 4) ensured their confidentiality as participants and the anonymity of the university, 5) instructed them on the timing of on-campus interviews, and 6) requested their participation in the study (*See Appendix C – Letter to Research Participants*). These participants were asked to respond by e-mail indicating their willingness to participate, and those who did not respond initially either were e-mailed a second time or were telephoned.

Additional participants for this study were selected by snowball sampling, asking the faculty and student participants who had been interviewed to identify any of their peers who might be willing to participate in the study. In turn, these additional participants were contacted by e-mail or telephone and, upon receiving the same information as did the initial participants, were asked to participate in this study.

A total of 33 research participants were interviewed from three university constituencies: administrator (12), faculty (9), and student (12). Individual, face-to-face interviews were conducted with the following participants identified by generic title to protect their confidentiality and the anonymity of the university. Those listed in regular type were identified by status sampling, and those listed in italics were identified by snowball sampling:

- **Administrator Constituency (12):** provost, senior student affairs officer, director of residence life, director of fraternity and sorority life, director of judicial affairs, director of campus safety, director of counseling services, director of health education, director of student legal services, director of new student programs, coordinator of the university's social normative marketing campaign, and coordinator of the university's alcohol-free, alternative social program (Mascot Nights).
- **Faculty Constituency (9):** two academic deans with faculty assignments, *a professor of art history*, a professor of education and history, *a professor of special education*, *a professor of business*, an associate professor of social welfare, *an associate professor of communication studies*, and an assistant professor of health, sport and exercise sciences.
- **Student Constituency (12):** student body president, residence hall association president, on-campus cooperative living association president, student union programming board president, interfraternity council president, panhellenic council president, the coordinator of GAMMA, an executive officer of the non-traditional student organization, and *four students selected by snowball sampling*.

An informed consent statement was reviewed with all of the participants, and the participants were asked to sign informed consent forms affirming their understanding of their rights as participants in this study (*See Appendix D – Informed Consent Statement and Form*). Krathwohl (1998) defines informed consent as “consent freely given by an individual who has been informed of the nature of the study, understands its procedures, knows who to contact if harmed, and understands he or she can withdraw at any time without malice” (p. 686). In keeping with this definition, all of the participants were informed of their rights to not answer a particular question and to withdraw from this research study at any time (Dobbert, 1982).

### **Data Collection**

Individual, face-to-face interviews with 33 research participants provided the primary data for this study. The participant interviews were conducted over a three-week period, beginning with the weeks of December 10 and December 17, 2001, and ending with follow-up and additional interviews during the week of March 4, 2002. The interviews were tape-recorded, and verbatim transcripts were made to obtain the participants’ constructions, as well as to confirm and expand on information obtained from previous interviews (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The length of the interviews varied from 60 to 90 minutes.

Interviewing was the most critical data collection method because it is a powerful way to gain greater human understanding (Fontana & Frey, 1994). In their discussion of interviewing as a data collection method, Fontana and Frey asserted:

Asking questions and getting answers is a much harder task than it may seem at first. The spoken or written word has always a residue of ambiguity, no matter how carefully we word the questions and report or code the answers.

**Yet, interviewing is one of the most common and most powerful ways we use to try to understand our fellow human beings [emphasis added]. (p. 47)**

According to Fontana and Frey (1994), interviews are classified as structured, unstructured, or semi-structured. In structured interviews, the researcher asks each participant a series of predetermined questions that have a limited set of responses, with little deviation in how the questions are asked or answered. In unstructured interviews, the researcher has some general topics and questions in mind but does not use a set of predetermined questions or impose close-ended questions on the participant, allowing for far greater latitude in the interview. In semi-structured interviews, the researcher has some guiding questions that may or may not be asked depending on participant responses to earlier questions, and the wording and order of the questions (if asked) may change from participant to participant. A semi-structured interview format was utilized for this study, which allowed information gathered from the initial participant interviews to focus and guide the subsequent interviews.

University policies and documents related to alcohol provided secondary data for this study. Dobbert (1982) asserted that document analysis is used to gain a better understanding of the nature of an institution. Document analysis was considered a secondary data source because it was used to 1) generate questions for the interviews, 2) explain policies, programs, terms, and nuances that surfaced during the interviews, and 3) confirm information obtained through the interviews. The following policies and documents were analyzed: the university student handbook, the Board of Regents' regulations governing the use of alcohol at university events (i.e., the university alcohol policy), the department of residence life student handbook, the department of residence life alcohol policy, and other university alcohol-

related policies and documents that apply to the student union and student organizations.

*Note: Due to the complete anonymity of the research site and to the length of its alcohol policy, the Board of Regents' regulations governing the use of alcohol at university events (i.e., the university alcohol policy) is neither attached as a separate document nor listed in the definition of terms. Any questions about the university alcohol policy should be directed to this researcher. The department of residence life alcohol policy is listed in the definition of terms.*

Alcohol education and abuse prevention program materials and related information from the various university departments that present or sponsor alcohol education and abuse prevention programs also provided secondary data. The following materials were analyzed: social normative marketing campaign materials, Alcohol Task Force minutes, Mascot Nights information, and other alcohol-related materials and information from university departments, including health education, counseling services, residence life, fraternity and sorority life, campus safety, and student legal services.

### **Interview Questions**

A participant-construct instrument was selected for the interview questions for this study. According to LeCompte and Preissle (1993), participant-construct instruments: are used to measure the strength of feeling people have about phenomena or to elicit the categories into which people classify items in their social and physical worlds. Participant-construct instruments help researchers identify the set of "agreed upons" that structure the life of each research participant.... Participant-construct instruments thus provide material for both process and values data. (pp. 162-163)

The interview questions used for the participant interviews related to the three overarching research questions for this study:

1. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding alcohol-related congruence – the co-congruence among the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and among administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and application of the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol?
2. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding the effect of alcohol-related institutional congruence on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol?
3. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding the effect of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol?

Again, it should be noted that the interviews were semi-structured, and the data collected through the initial participant interviews were used to focus and guide the interview questions for the subsequent participants. The initial interview questions were:

1. In your own words, please describe the university's philosophy on alcohol.
2. What is your perception of the congruence of this philosophy among university administrators, faculty, and students? If possible, please cite specific examples of strong congruence and/or strong incongruence.
3. What is your perception of the congruence among university administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and application of the university's

- philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol? If possible, please cite specific examples of strong congruence and/or strong incongruence.
4. In your opinion, does the congruence among university administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and application of the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol have an effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol? Please elaborate.
  5. To the best of your knowledge, how are alcohol-related policies and programs developed at this university? Please describe the process and who is involved.
  6. What is your perception of the level of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development at this university? In your opinion, is student participation actively sought and genuinely valued? Please elaborate.
  7. *(Follow-up question for non-students)* What is your perception of students' perceptions of their level of participation in alcohol-related policy and program development? From your perspective, do you believe students believe their participation is sought actively and valued genuinely? Please elaborate.
  8. In your opinion, should student participation be sought actively and valued in alcohol-related policy and program development? Please elaborate. What are the risks and benefits for university officials in doing so or in not doing so? What are the risks and benefits for the students in doing so or in not doing so?
  9. In your opinion, does student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development have an effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol? Please elaborate and if possible, cite examples to substantiate your opinion.



10. What is one thing the university could do within the context of its existing philosophy related to alcohol to engage students more actively in alcohol-related policy and program development?
11. Do you have any additional comments or insights that you believe are important to this research project? If so, please elaborate.

### **Data Analysis**

Data from the document analysis were recorded on document summary forms (Miles & Huberman, 1984) and arranged by particular themes. Data from the participant interviews were fractured, coded, and analyzed using categories to facilitate comparisons. Fracturing, coding, and analyzing data in meaningful, logical, and categorical ways are critical steps in data analysis and should be reflected in the research design of the study (Krathwohl, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Yin, 1994). As the interview transcripts were produced and analyzed, the data were merged into categories by fracturing, coding, and copying them to separate documents. Each time a new theme surfaced, the data were fractured, coded, and copied to a new document. As repeated themes were encountered, the data were fractured, coded, and copied to the appropriate document. The process of fracturing, coding, and copying data was done utilizing a personal computer.

Four categories were used for fracturing, coding, and copying the data from the participant interviews. Three of the categories corresponded directly with the three overarching research questions for this study. The fourth category was used for additional participant perceptions and constructions that were relevant to this study, but did not relate directly to one of the three overarching research questions. It should be noted here that “similar” data were not assigned automatically or unilaterally to a particular category. For

example, general data from the participant interviews that related to an alcohol abuse prevention initiative (e.g., Mascot Nights) were fractured, coded, and copied to the “Additional Participant Perceptions and Constructions” category. However, if specific data illuminated the effect of student participation in Mascot Nights on students’ attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, these data were fractured, coded, and copied to the “Student Participation in Alcohol-Related Policy and Program Development and Students’ Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol” category. The distinction made in this example was only one of many careful distinctions made in categorizing the data from the participant interviews.

The data were analyzed using within-constituency and cross-constituency analyses. Within-constituency analysis was performed by analyzing the data collected from the participants within the same constituency, for example, analyzing the data collected from one administrator in relation to the data collected from another administrator. Cross-constituency analysis was performed by analyzing the data collected from the participants across the three constituencies, for example, analyzing the data collected from the administrator constituency in relation to the data collected from the faculty and student constituencies.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed four criteria to aid researchers in determining whether or not the iterations of collecting, categorizing, and analyzing data have reached points of diminishing return and logical conclusion: exhaustion of sources, saturation of categories, emergence of regularities, and overextension. Exhaustion of sources occurs when researchers are unable to access additional sources from which to collect and analyze data. Saturation of categories occurs when additional data collection and analysis begin to reveal little or no new information. Emergence of regularities occurs when data themes and

patterns are clearly evident. Overextension occurs when additional data collection and analysis begin to produce extraneous information that lies beyond the existing emergent themes and patterns and is not supported sufficiently by the data.

For this study, additional sources of data were not exhausted; clearly, there were other administrators, faculty, and students who could have been interviewed. However, data collection and analysis continued until the other three criteria established by Lincoln and Guba (1985) had been met: 1) additional data collection and analysis failed to produce any new information; 2) the data that had been collected emerged into clear themes and patterns; and 3) additional data collection and analysis began to produce extraneous information that was beyond the scope of this study and could not be substantiated by the existing data.

### **Trustworthiness Features**

Krathwohl (1998) defines trustworthiness as “the judged credibility of a qualitative research study based upon the appropriateness of the data gathering and analytic processes and their resulting interpretations” (p. 694). Many researchers equate “trustworthiness” in the naturalistic, qualitative research paradigm to “scientific rigor” in the positivistic, quantitative research paradigm (Krathwohl, 1998). Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe trustworthiness in terms of four features: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These features often are compared analogously to the four criteria associated with scientific rigor: internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity, respectively (Krathwohl, 1998). In preparing and analyzing the data, the trustworthiness features prescribed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were utilized.

**Credibility**

Credibility in the naturalistic research paradigm is compared to internal validity in the positivistic research paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Five of their strategies were used to strengthen the credibility of this study and its results and conclusions: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, member checking, triangulation, and peer debriefing. On-site participant interviews were conducted over a three-week period (the weeks of December 10 and 17, 2001 and March 4, 2002), which allowed for individual interaction and trust-building to occur with the research participants over this period of sufficient, prolonged engagement. A significant amount of time was taken to completely understand and fully account for all aspects of this study through sufficient, persistent observation.

Member checking, the process of soliciting the research participants' feedback on the data and analysis of the data, occurred the week of April 29, 2002. Segments of the interview transcripts (the data) along with data summaries, interpretations, and analyses were presented to the participants so they could provide feedback and verify their accuracy (Krathwohl, 1998). Maxwell (1996) contended that member checking "is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpretation of the meaning of what they [research participants] say and the perspective they have on what is going on" (p. 94).

The data were triangulated, which involves collecting data from multiple sources and using multiple methods, by analyzing the data between and among the participant interview data, document analysis data, and the research literature and other scholarly works on the problem of student alcohol abuse and its impact on higher education. Triangulation "reduces the risk of chance associations and of systematic biases due to a specific method and allows a better assessment of the generality of the explanations" (Maxwell, 1996, pp. 94-95).

Finally, a peer-debrief was conducted with Dr. John H. Schuh, one of the three principal authors of Involving Colleges, to assess the appropriateness of the application of one of the conclusions from Involving Colleges to this research study. Peer-debriefs were conducted with two members of this researcher's program of study committee to strengthen the credibility of the qualitative research methods used in this study. Additionally, peer-debriefs were conducted with two student affairs colleagues to strengthen the credibility of the conclusions from this study. These two colleagues possess 50 years of collective experience in higher education working directly or indirectly with alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives.

### **Transferability**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) liken transferability in qualitative research to external validity in quantitative research. Assessing the transferability or applicability of qualitative research is often dependent on the degree to which researchers are able to provide thick descriptions of their research sites and data. Thick description is detailed information on the research setting, context, and data that allows others to judge whether or not the results and conclusions are transferable or applicable to other settings.

Because of the sensitive nature of this study, particularly its research focus, the terms of the research agreement limited this researcher's ability to provide a detailed, thick description of the research site. However, elaborate, thick descriptions of the data, in the form of extensive participant perceptions and constructions, were provided so that readers of this study and other researchers would have the best possible information to assess the transferability of this research study to another setting.

### **Confirmability**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) parallel confirmability in the naturalistic research paradigm with objectivity in the positivistic research paradigm. Confirmability in qualitative research relates to enhancing the trustworthiness of the research product. The results from this study were based on the data and logical data inferences generated by sufficient descriptions of the participants' perceptions and constructions. The results and conclusions from this study were compared with other research findings through a thorough review the research literature and other scholarly works on the problem of student alcohol abuse and its impact on higher education.

A rigorous data trail, or audit trail, was maintained to enhance the confirmability of this study. An audit trail is "a record of the data gathering and analysis processes kept by the researcher so that another researcher could judge the appropriateness of those processes or possibly use the record to replicate the study" (Krathwohl, 1998, p. 680). The data or audit trail for this research study includes the following: interview tapes and transcripts; participant interview summary forms; document analysis summary forms; and fractured, coded, and categorized data documents.

### **Dependability**

Dependability in qualitative research is equated to reliability in quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability in qualitative research relates to enhancing the trustworthiness of the research process. Evidence of the appropriateness of the research inquiries, decisions, and processes throughout this study was provided by way of the number of research participants (33), the prolonged period of engagement with the participants (three

weeks of initial, additional, and follow-up interviews and one week of member checking), and the length of the interviews (60 to 90 minutes).

### **Chapter Summary**

Chapter Three established the conceptual framework for this study through a discussion of the overall research approach and rationale and the specific research design and methodology for this study. The role of the researcher, the selection and description of the research site and participants, the data collection and analysis strategies, and the trustworthiness features for this study were also discussed in Chapter Three.

Chapter Four will reveal the results of this study by presenting the data that were collected from the personal interviews with the research participants. The results will be presented in three major sections organized around the three constituencies into which the research participants were classified: administrator, faculty, or student.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS**

**In this chapter, the results of this study are presented in three major sections organized around the three constituencies into which the research participants were classified: administrator, faculty, or student. Within each major section or constituency, the results are presented in subsections organized by the three overarching research questions that guided this study:**

- 1. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding alcohol-related congruence – the co-congruence among the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and among administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and application of the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol? This subsection is titled: Perceptions of Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruence.**
- 2. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding the effect of alcohol-related institutional congruence on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol? This subsection is titled: ARIC (Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruence) and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol.**
- 3. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding the effect of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol? This subsection is titled: Student Participation in ARPPD (Alcohol-Related Policy and Program Development) and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol.**



In addition, each major section concludes with a fourth subsection on additional participant perceptions and constructions that are relevant to this study. This subsection is titled: **Additional Participant Perceptions and Constructions**.

To protect the participants' confidentiality, the quotations and excerpts that follow in this chapter are identified by tape numbers, which were assigned to the participants based on the order in which they were interviewed (e.g., "Tape 1" refers to the first participant interviewed, "Tape 2" refers to the second participant interviewed, and so on). The page number that immediately follows each tape number refers to the page number of the interview transcript from which the quotation or excerpt was taken (e.g., "Tape 3, p. 4" refers to page four of the interview transcript of the third participant interviewed).

### **Administrator Constituency**

#### **Perceptions of Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruence**

The administrator participants were asked to articulate the university's philosophy on alcohol. Their responses ranged from "I'm not sure I know what it [university philosophy on alcohol] is" (Tape 17, p. 1) to "I don't think [the university] has a philosophy relating to alcohol" (Tape 11, p. 1) to "I don't think anyone on this campus comes to agreement on what it [university philosophy on alcohol] should be" (Tape 19, p. 1) to "It is very difficult to say what the university's philosophy [on alcohol] is because it varies by division and by unit" (Tape 12, p. 4) to "[The university] is a dry campus so there should be no alcohol on this campus, period" (Tape 13, p. 1).

When asked to describe the university's philosophy on alcohol, one administrator provided the simple, succinct response that the "law of the land" prevailed:

In general,...the law of the land trumps any university rule, and the law of the land specifies 21 as the drinking age. So, as a state institution, we don't have much choice except to say to our students you have got to follow the law.

Beyond that, we [the university] do not permit the use of alcohol on campus, except at various events associated with fundraising at this point. So even when the law of the land would permit drinking, state law and Regents' policy generally would not permit even students of [legal] age to drink except at set events. (Tape 10, p. 1)

The "law of the land" and the legal drinking age characterized another administrator's description of the university's philosophy on alcohol. But the same administrator pointed to some "contradictions" in the university's philosophy on alcohol:

I think the university has a very strong stance when it comes to alcohol and the philosophy in that it [the university] is guided by the state...If you're not 21, you cannot consume alcoholic beverages anywhere, regardless of whether you are at home or whether you are on state property or private property or whatever. So, I think that state law pretty much mandates the university's philosophy [on alcohol]. I think sometimes there are some contradictions in that philosophy. I think they [the contradictions] were addressed several years ago when alcohol was taken out of the campus union and there were certain instances when it [alcohol] was allowed at certain functions, but yet now we've implemented tailgating [with alcohol] at football games and it's still okay at athletic events and those types of things. So, I think there is some incongruency in those particular philosophies....But I think their [the

university's] overall philosophy is that if you are not 21, then you are not allowed to do it [consume alcohol]. But I think there are some exceptions made to that particular rule. (Tape 3, p. 1)

However, another administrator did not feel as if the "law of the land" or any other law, for that matter, prevailed. This participant was extremely passionate about the "incongruities" that have resulted from no clear, consistent university philosophy on alcohol:

I don't think [the university] has a philosophy relating to alcohol. I think there are many perspectives on alcohol that different facets of the university enforce. My understanding four years ago from [the president]...was there would be absolutely no tolerance for alcohol, none whatsoever! And that even meant things as silly as you couldn't have an empty beer can in your residence hall room using it as a structure for furniture or decoration because that implied that you or someone drank that can of beer. So, we [university officials] had an edict from [the president] that there would be absolutely no tolerance for alcohol. At the same time, [the president] approved building suites in our football stadium and would allow serving of alcohol in those suites. So, we have absolutely no tolerance for alcohol, period, and then we're told in the next breath, well, in some places....And then this fall – truly, I tell you I don't know what the alcohol philosophy is at the university – we had a new athletic director who decided we needed a party atmosphere at our football games. If you're going to watch football, then you might as well be drunk because that's the only way you're going to enjoy it, I guess. [The athletic

department] came up with this...“Proud to be a [Mascot]” campaign where we were going to allow drinking in designated spots around the football field three hours before the game....But you were supposed to give a donation so it would be “fundraising” in keeping with the Regents’ rules on alcohol. Again, there is no philosophy on alcohol in this place other than, if it meets your needs or the given administrative needs, we [the university] will allow it. But if it doesn’t meet these needs, oh my God, there’s no alcohol here....So, I don’t know what our alcohol policy is. (Tape 11, pp. 1-2)

Another administrator, when asked to describe the university’s philosophy on alcohol, indicated that some recent developments, including the decisions to allow alcohol in the skybox suites and at tailgating at football games, have blurred what once was a relatively consistent university philosophy on alcohol:

There have been some recent changes that make that [university philosophy on alcohol] a more difficult question to answer. Essentially, I think the university’s philosophy [on alcohol] has been consistent with the overarching concept that they’ve tried to maintain, which has been to be consistent with the laws of the state. Sticking with the 21-year-old limit for drinking and for folks who are below that age, technically, they shouldn’t be drinking in the university’s view, whether that’s on campus or off campus or anywhere else. The recent issue with tailgating has raised that question again, and also broadened the scope in terms of where alcohol is used on campus and who gets to have access to it and who doesn’t, regardless of your age. So that’s thrown a bit of a question about the consistency throughout their philosophy

and their policy [on alcohol]. For the most part, I think the university has tried to remain consistent with the 21-year-old age limit. But clearly, there are some areas like the [president's] skybox at the football stadium or various other things that open that up for some discussions. (Tape 16, p. 1)

Another participant voiced that there is little agreement about the university's philosophy on alcohol because no one in a leadership role has taken the initiative to assemble the appropriate university officials and stakeholders to develop the philosophy:

I don't think anyone on this campus comes to agreement on what it [university philosophy on alcohol] should be. And if there's anything that speaks to that more clearly it would be the tailgate policy, where, from what I understand, not a whole lot of people [university officials] were contacted as far as giving input on it. We certainly weren't. We, as a matter of fact, made the phone call to say, "Do you want to talk to us?" But I think that's just a good example of how disjointed the whole philosophy about alcohol is on this campus. I think while everyone is in agreement that the university doesn't want to experience injuries, accidents, or those kinds of things, no one is really in agreement or even in a leadership position to pull everybody together to say what it [university philosophy on alcohol] is going to be, what it will look like, how does that play out in policies and in enforcement and in resources, and just the day-to-day expectations on how our students will meet-up to whatever standards we develop. So, I don't think there is one [university philosophy on alcohol]. (Tape 19, p. 1)

Referencing the Board of Regents' alcohol policy, one administrator described two divergent tracks that the university takes when it comes to alcohol-related issues – the moral track and revenue track. This administrator thought the university was on the revenue track, headed in the wrong direction:

I think the university takes two tracks related to alcohol. As a moral track, the university has worked to reduce the amount of alcohol consumption by students in general. It [the university] has tried to basically follow the guidelines set forth by the Regents as far as alcohol consumption on campus. They have pretty much pushed that policy for numerous years. The second track deals with issues of revenue dealing with sporting events. The track record there, in my opinion, is not as stellar as it could be. I think that we [the university] have actually slipped and gone backwards. Not only in our university, but our conference as well....I think we just changed directions. So I think for track two, we're not doing the job. (Tape 23, p. 1)

Another administrator advocated the need for greater consistency between university departments when dealing with alcohol-related issues that affect students, suggesting subtly that some students may operate under a different set of expectations than do others. This administrator also was troubled particularly with the athletic department's decision to allow alcohol at tailgating and that the decision was made without involving other university stakeholders, specifically students and student affairs staff:

Again, it gets back to the consistency of messages sent to students. Do we have different messages or different expectations for maybe our Greek students versus our residence life students or any other student organizations?

When [dealing with] issues related to alcohol, whether it's programming or tailgating in athletics or anything else, it would be oh, so helpful to have some consistent institutional stances or approaches to those issues. I've not seen anything of that sort happen, certainly not with the recent tailgating thing; that was a left field-type deal. It [the decision] came from the athletic department and I'm sure there was probably some [high-level student affairs] involvement, but from the best I can tell, it was almost more after the fact. The athletic department already had the word out there that it [tailgating with alcohol] was going to happen....It should be seen as a student issue, a student-related issue that should involve the division of student affairs, but it did not. Something that impacts student life and campus culture so much, for that not to have even come through the student affairs division just blows my mind.

(Tape 13, pp. 4-5)

Another participant blamed the departmentalized nature of the university for the lack of alcohol-related institutional congruence, singling out especially the student affairs division. According to this participant, university officials across divisions and departments, who share direct responsibility for alcohol-related programming, do not communicate and the result is mixed messages to students about alcohol:

We are very departmentalized, very compartmentalized here....Everybody's out there doing their own thing....We all send different messages [to students about alcohol]. Whereas I may talk with students about moderation and responsibility, the residence halls [staff] may be out there saying just don't do

it [drink], and student legal services [staff] saying we can get you out of this [alcohol-related legal problems]. (Tape 22, p. 5)

Another participant referred to “different perspectives” on alcohol versus alcohol-related incongruence among the student affairs division staff. Unfortunately, the common perspectives or attitudes among the staff seem to be “cynicism” and “fatality:”

I would say within the division of student affairs, you’d have a set of different perspectives [on alcohol]. In [the department of residence life], it would be obey and enforce the law. In the student union, you’d find an attitude of “provide it [alcohol] in a safe environment and demonstrate that it can be used responsibly.” A lot of the [student] union [staff] resisted taking it [alcohol] out [of the union]. They would like to have it back in there because they feel it’s something that attracts students to the union, and they say it’s better that they have a beer while their bowling here rather than somewhere off campus and in the bushes, so to speak, because we don’t allow it. In student life, particularly student activities, you’re going to find more emphasis on an education and controlling it [alcohol]. I think they [student affairs staff] know that they all have probably different priorities and different perspectives [on alcohol]....But I think most people are operating under the fatalistic attitude that this [student alcohol abuse] is not a problem we’re going to solve, and we’re being asked to do unrealistic things, and so, we really just kind of hope we can keep the lid on the place. There’s a little bit of cynicism and fatality in the attitudes of the people [student affairs staff]. (Tape 12, pp. 12-13)



The problem may not lie always in the departmentalized nature of the university or in the different perspectives of its personnel; it may lie with simple, personal responsibility in a given situation. This participant provided an example of how a university official can confront a negative alcohol-related situation and, in turn, promote an environment that is congruent with institutional expectations related to alcohol:

A [local student bar] flyer was on the door of [the central administration building]. Actually, I was going to an Alcohol Task Force meeting, and I knew that there were probably ten other administrators who had walked through the same door, and it [the flyer] was still there; I took it down. Just from [the street] to the steps of [the central administration building] there were four different bars' specials written on the sidewalk. I have a problem with that. Indeed, there's First Amendment free speech, and that's got to be respected. We have a responsibility to [students and parents] and I think it would behoove us to be more aggressive in creating, not a political environment, but a responsible environment where responsible choices are promoted and expected. (Tape 24, p. 12)

Responding to a broad question related to alcohol-related institutional congruence, another participant provided an example of incongruence between the tailgating policy and how, in practice, it is enforced:

I think it really makes sense to have a high-level of [alcohol-related] congruence, not only congruence on campus between policies and programs, but also environmentally with the police – the city police and [campus] police. From the discussions I've heard, they're struggling with that, too. [The

police] are good at understanding that this is a college campus, not a city and that part of their understanding...is that [students] will do certain things. You don't treat them [students] in the same way you would a hardened criminal, even though the incidental behavior may be the same....There's difficulty with [tailgating alcohol policy] enforcement during half-time. Technically, the use of alcohol is supposed to stop when kick-off happens. The first statement was no you couldn't leave [at half-time]; if you were out, you were out. However, from personal experience I went out to get my coat and I was given a ticket to re-enter. So, what they said and what they did were a little different. You walk around the parking lots at half-time and clearly there's folks still sitting out there drinking....The last couple of games they wanted to reduce the number of contacts police were having, so they had a group of staff take different parking lots and go through them and talk to folks and say, "Hey, thanks for coming, but I just want to remind you that drinking is suspended after kick-off."....There's some mushiness about that. Are we trying to educate them and cajole them...or are we going to enforce this thing [tailgating alcohol policy] and send police on it? (Tape 16, pp. 9-10)

Another participant discussed the inconsistency that exists among officers of the campus police department. Depending on which officer responds, students may or may not be cited for an alcohol-related violation:

If they [campus police] are going to write DUIs, then they need to do that consistently. I've heard repeatedly from a number of different officers and the director that it just depends on which officer is working the weekend night

shift and how many DUIs are going to be written because the DUIs are a long process, very involved, and you pretty much need to be right when you make that assessment. And so, some officers are just going to let the person [student] go. They'll just tell the other person in the car, you drive, without actually writing the ticket. So there are definitely inconsistencies there.

(Tape 19, p. 13)

In discussing the congruence among university officials in their understanding and application of the university's philosophy, policies, and programs related to alcohol, another participant stated that institutional incongruence is not unique to alcohol. This participant substantiated this point with an example of institutional incongruence about holiday observances:

I would have to say that I don't think that alcohol [incongruence] is unique, comparing it to other policies on campus. For example, we received an e-mail from [the senior student affairs officer] a couple weeks ago regarding holiday decorations. No Christmas tree, no tree – whether it's Christmas or not – we don't want a tree. If it's in your [personal] office, that's okay, but anywhere else, lobby or whatever, no. You have to show all the holidays; it has to be generic, etc. The same day we got an invitation to the [president's] reception and there was a Christmas tree [on the invitation]. Totally mixed messages....

What I'm saying is...[incongruence] is not uncommon here. (Tape 17, p. 10)

#### **ARIC and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol**

When asked if alcohol-related institutional congruence has an effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, the administrator participants all agreed it does.

One administrator asserted that the very nature of higher education institutions, referring to them as tall and thick, independent “silos,” does not facilitate the transmission of clear, consistent messages from different divisions within the institution (e.g., student affairs and academic affairs) or from different departments within the same division (e.g., residence life and student activities). The result of this “silo” effect is incongruent messages about alcohol to students, which leaves the students confused about what is and is not “okay” related to alcohol:

There has to be a lot of dissonance and certainly confusion among students who are in one of these [academic] departments...where they were freely served or allowed to be served alcohol. Then, the same student as a member of XYZ fraternity hears [the fraternity advisor] telling them to clean-up their act in terms of alcohol use. The university would like you to be more responsible; obey the law, so forth and so on. There has to be dissonance when students traverse through their relationships in these different silos.

(Tape 12, p. 5)

Another administrator indicated that it is not one isolated situation or one ongoing practice that has contributed to this confusion among students, but a series of administrative decisions and policy changes, along with conflicting educational initiatives and policy exceptions, that collectively have affected students’ attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. This administrator believed that the cumulative effect of this on students is problematic and university officials have been negligent in allowing this to happen. This same administrator described the university’s overall environment related to alcohol:

Inconsistent, certainly from a student perspective. When you get into issues like you've got a zero-to-five [social normative marketing] campaign on campus and you're trying to stress that the scare tactic-type programming is not going to work, so you focus instead on reality-based programming. Let's try to get students to understand what their peers are truly doing in terms of alcohol behavior.... You've got that going on at the same time there are issues like allowing alcohol in the skyboxes at the [football] stadium; this year, tailgating [with alcohol] being reinstated. I think for students that it [the university environment related to alcohol] is inconsistent and sends real mixed messages, ones that frustrate them. I think it's unfair for us [university officials] to be trying to expect them [students] to sort that out. From the students' perspective, it's more of something that behooves the administrators themselves or gets the institution more money or is approved by alums or something. Then policies get changed or locations where alcohol is okay gets approved. I think that's hard for us to do to our students. (Tape 13, p. 2)

The decision to allow on-campus tailgating with alcohol in conjunction with football games was the most recent decision in the series of administrative decisions and policy changes identified above that have contributed to confusion and mixed messages among the students as it relates to alcohol. As with the majority of participants, this administrator viewed tailgating with alcohol negatively because of the message it sends to students and in turn, how students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol are affected:

I think it [tailgating with alcohol] is quite negative. We haven't seen any negative consequences of it yet, but I think it has to send to students the

message that the way to really enjoy an activity is to get loaded before you participate in that activity. It [tailgating with alcohol] has been sold and pushed under the notion of responsible tailgating, but there's nothing really in place to ensure that it's responsible, except the police patrolling to ensure that there's no underage drinking or rough behavior. I think that it's likely to be quite negative long-run and send the message even to underage students that drinking is what you do if you're going to enjoy yourself. (Tape 10, p. 3)

Another administrator offered the students' perspective of the double standard of what is acceptable for upper administration but not acceptable for students when it comes to alcohol on campus. Such contradiction creates "animosity" among the students, according to this participant:

There's been a mixed message [about alcohol] since I've been here...at least from the upper [administration] end, and this is from the students' perspective....I see the [president] having alcohol at his house, having alcohol in [alumni and donor room adjacent to the basketball arena], having alcohol in the skyboxes [at the football stadium], but yet a student who's 21 cannot drink a beer, technically, in the residence halls. And that's sending a mixed message to the students. How come it's okay for upper administration to do it, but yet we [students] can't do that even if we're responsible? And so, I think the students have felt some animosity about that. (Tape 6, p. 2)

A second administrator offered another double standard of which students are aware. When it comes to alcohol, what is acceptable for alumni is not acceptable for students who

are of legal drinking age. The double standard renders the university ineffective in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol:

I think they [students] can point to...the administration as talking out of both sides of their mouth. That the university doesn't have a clear understanding of what kind of behavior is okay with alcohol because what's allowable for the alumni isn't allowable for students of age....I think that because we [the university] don't state a clear value [related to alcohol] we don't affect their [students'] behavior much at all. (Tape 11, p. 6)

Another participant added that the discord between the university's policies and practices related to alcohol is not new to students. Students are not ignorant about all of the inconsistencies, and as such, have developed an attitude that the university is not sincere or serious in its efforts to curb student alcohol abuse:

I think...students simply [think] the university is going through the motions of having an Alcohol Task Force and saying obey the law, etc. Because on the other hand, the university, on its buses and newspapers, is saying if you're going to drink, drink responsibly. And then more recently, the university is saying if you happen to get invited up to one of those skyboxes, it's okay for you to drink there....With the tailgating policy, we're telling students to bring a six-pack, bring a case, sit down in the middle of the parking lot and it is perfectly legal for you to consume if you're of [legal drinking] age. Clearly, we're sending a mixed message there....Students have been aware that even before we allowed it [alcohol] in the skyboxes, we were allowing it in the [alumni and donor] room connected to the [basketball arena], and that some of

our alums were able to go and have some alcoholic beverages before a game and come into the [basketball arena] through a protective walk, go back and have one at half-time if they want. Students are not dumb to that and know that the institution is allowing these kinds of practices despite its policies related to alcohol. (Tape 12, pp. 7-8)

Another participant commented on the effect of the tailgating policy on students: "Our students...are not dumb, and I think they realize that the bottom line is the bottom dollar, and we [the university] will sacrifice our integrity to make money" (Tape 22, p. 7).

Some administrators referred to a widely known, highly criticized situation where alcohol was provided to underage students at an annual university-sponsored event involving National Merit freshmen scholars, alumni, and university officials. The students were not asked to provide identification, and no alumni or university officials asked any questions; the underage students drank freely. One administrator who attended the event commented on the "inconsistency" of the event with the university's philosophy on alcohol and the "very mixed messages" sent to the students in attendance:

I was there. The [university-sponsored event] happened in [city]....It's a black tie affair to raise money for National Merit Scholars. They bring in National Merit Scholars to parade them around the donors as if they're animals. They sit at a table usually with the deans or those kinds of people. They were not at our table, but I do know that at the table next to us hosted by [a university official] the students did drink. Their [students'] wine was served with their meal; everybody drank. I think that sends a very mixed message to students. [The event] is a real big to-do. Anybody in the administration is there and the



big donors are there, the band is there, [the mascot] is there. It's really neat; it's inconsistent. I don't understand why they [university officials] let the kids [students] drink, yet we tell them back on campus don't you drink, don't you drink. (Tape 11, pp. 12-13)

Another administrator at the event also commented on it, attributing the underage students' ability to access alcohol to innocent oversight and poor planning by the event organizers. However, this administrator conjectured that had the campus student newspaper not publicized the issue of underage drinking at the event, it probably would have continued, unchecked the following year. This same administrator added that with even greater sensitivity to underage drinking, the availability of a cash bar at the event is problematic:

I was aware of that [underage drinking] when it first happened, and I have to tell you it happened because nobody thought about it....We take the National Merits up there to be part of the "look at these whiz-kids, don't you want to give us more money to help support them?" So those two factions [National Merit program staff and alumni organizers] really never came together in the planning to say, whoops, wait a minute, we've got to make sure that this happens and that happens. So, it happened because nobody thought about it ahead of time. We [the university] got tripped up because the [student newspaper] was there or became aware that a number of these students freely were able to have alcoholic beverages during the evening. My understanding was that steps were taken the next year to prevent that from happening. With the cash bar in advance of the banquet, however, it would be very easy for a student in the rush to purchase a bar ticket and not be asked to see an ID....I

have to tell you, had that not been given some visibility by the [student newspaper], it probably would have gone on the next year. (Tape 12, pp. 5-6)

The subject of university officials and students socializing together with alcohol was discussed with the administrator participants. There are no university policies prohibiting this kind of socialization, but it can have a negative effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, according to one administrator. The effect is more pronounced if the students involved, or those who happen to be at the same location, are underage. This same administrator offered strong opinions on university officials drinking with students and the effect of such behavior on the students:

I don't think it [university officials drinking with students] is appropriate....

Do I think it's a good idea for the dean of students to go down to the [local student bar]? Hell no! Do I think it's a good idea for [the dean of students] to go to [another local student bar] to see what students do? Hell no! Do I think it's okay for the Greek coordinator to have a beer with some students? I'm not sure. Do I think it's a good thing for them to have the same social circles? Hell no! I think there ought to be a real clear separation [between university officials and students]....It is okay to drink if you're 21. But, what if you're at the [local student bar] and everybody knows what your job is, and there are people [students] who are not 21 there, and you stay, you have sent a message that you condone that behavior [underage drinking]. If you get up and leave, you send a very clear message that you do not condone that behavior, but I don't know too many of them [university officials] who'd get up and leave. It's a sensitive topic. (Tape 11, p. 12)

Finally, alcohol-related institutional congruence and its effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, framed in the context of establishing alcohol-related expectations for students, was simplified by the same participant:

If you tell them [students] what to expect, they usually will meet your expectations. Here at [the university], we tell them that we expect deep thought or we expect diversity of thought and they meet our expectations.... You don't tell them what to expect on alcohol and they will meet those expectations too. (Tape 11, p. 7)

#### **Student Participation in ARPPD and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol**

When asked about student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development, most administrators agreed that student participation has a positive effect on their attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Some asserted that the positive effect can actually transfer itself to other students who are not participating directly. However, the majority of participants mentioned that an important piece is missing – students are not involved or participating for the most part. This was evidenced by comments like “BACCHUS, for all intensive purposes, is nonexistent on this campus” (Tape 24, p. 2); “There is no student representation on the Alcohol Task Force” (Tape 6, p. 28); “I don't see any significant student led efforts” (Tape 10, p. 6); and “[Students] go out of their way to run the other direction, quite frankly” (Tape 12, p. 11).

One of the participants was more hopeful about student participation in alcohol-related programs and referred to the trickle-down effect that visible, well-liked student leaders have on other students:

You're hoping that...students are willing to step forward and put some muscle into [alcohol-related programs]. You're hoping that those students are well-connected, instead of students who are not well-connected....[A female student leader]...would come to [Mascot] Nights and next thing you know, she's off making announcements at the [student government] meeting that are going to 70 senators. And those 70 senators who all like [this female student leader] are all going [to Mascot Nights] knowing she's going to be there.... They're then going back to the residence halls, and they're saying...you know such and such is going. That's the trickle-down effect and that's huge. You have to have the student buy-in to make that happen, as compared to some administrator barking out orders.... Seeing the student body president at some events...other students see that or hear that....The next thing you know, he's at [Mascot] Nights saying to others [students] you should be going to these things. The next thing you know, because [the student body president] said that, 10 other people, 20 other people are coming....That's the trickle-down effect. (Tape 6, pp. 27-28)

To the contrary, another participant insisted that student leaders at this university are, at times, part of the problem versus part of the solution:

What's really funny is some of our student leaders are the worst offenders of alcohol abuse. We have this turnover at student [government] elections every year. The old student body president and [others] are drunk out of their minds, drinking – this is hearsay – drinking in the union in the [student government] offices and nobody cares. What message are we sending to them

[students]? The university tries to remove the alcohol from that, but the students are like, "No, this is a tradition, we've got to do this."....The student leaders' use alcohol on this campus! (Tape 11, p. 10)

Referring to student participation in the Alcohol Task Force, another participant suggested that official student appointments to the Task Force from student government would secure better participation from the students:

I think there should be more student participation, regular student participation [in the Alcohol Task Force]. We [the Alcohol Task Force] have invited students in on an occasional basis to kind of testify, if you will, about various issues. Their information has been really helpful. The structure, in terms of membership of the committee [Task Force]...there's no permanent student representatives there. (Tape 16, p. 3)

When asked about the effect of this level of student participation on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, the same participant responded, "I'm not sure that I have a good way of measuring that [the effect of this level of student participation on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol] other than to say it doesn't appear that there has been any significant change in their [students'] drinking behavior" (Tape 16, p. 4). This same participant continued by commenting, in general, on student participation in alcohol-related programs at the university:

I think the [student] participation level [in alcohol-related programs] has been generally narrow. Those [students] who participate are folks who, for whatever reason, are typically opposed to the use of alcohol, whether they be the SADD/MADD group or [students with] spiritual or moral convictions,

who have tended to be members of these groups and be active in these groups. The issue for me isn't so much their participation, as it is their effectiveness, and how many other people [students] they can draw into their groups. I think it [student participation in alcohol-related programs] is limited at best. (Tape 16, p. 7)

Commenting specifically on students as peer educators, this same participant viewed peer educators as generally ineffective, having little effect on "mainstream" students. However, according to this participant, with appropriate oversight from professional staff and with a different type of student getting involved, peer education can be more effective:

Students who engage in peer education or join BACCHUS or GAMMA are students who are not considered mainstream by the rest of the group. And so, they have little or no credibility [with their peers]. They're considered geeks or tee-totalers...that separates them out from the rest of the mainstream people [students] "who really know how to have fun"....They're pretty much discounted [by their peers]....I think peer education is something that could be a really effective tool but it's not. I don't think people realize or are willing to spend the time and effort it takes to really develop a quality peer education program. It takes a tremendous amount of supervision and time and energy to follow these folks around. Not just send them around, but be with them and help them develop...so that they do end up being able to appeal to a broader cross-section [of students]. The people [students] that end up being in a peer education program around here are folks who are majors in health education and science, who are already, again, predisposed to that kind of approach and

value and involvement....We don't get a broad representation of general folks out there. Some people do it because it's an easy A! (Tape 16, p. 8)

Another participant shared the same concern about the effectiveness of peer education efforts given the nature, or perceived nature, of the students who typically are interested in serving as peer educators:

It think it goes back to the [Mascot] Nights thing where I say the folks that are involved in the [Mascot] Nights program are the folks who aren't drinking anyway and wouldn't be out partying anyway. And so goes peer education.... If you have a peer educator who's...never had a drink in their life and is dead set against alcohol, and they are educating these students who are out to have a good time, the students aren't going to identify with them [the peer educators]. On the flip side, if you have a peer educator who is out partying, the students are going question their authenticity. In theory, the best people to get through to students are other students, however, in practice it's difficult to facilitate effectively. (Tape 22, p. 17)

When asked about university officials' outreach efforts to get students involved and to participate in alcohol-related policy and program development, this participant commented on the university's not-so-genuine tactic of engaging students:

I know that there's an effort made to have student participation [in alcohol-related policy development]. I don't know if it's token, though. It is in a lot of other cases. With the [Alcohol] Task Force I don't recall, except maybe a couple of times, having students on that committee. Other committees, I know...[there is] student participation. They'll have a seat on XYZ, but I

don't know how valued it [their participation] is....Especially if you're making policy...you're going to have more buy-in if you've got them [students] participating in it [policy development] from the beginning.

(Tape 17, pp. 4-5)

Another participant shared a strong message about student buy-in at the university in general and with the Alcohol Task Force in particular. Put simply, student buy-in does not happen, according to this participant:

Student buy-in in anything on this campus does not happen, especially with the Alcohol Task Force. I think there were a couple of students that started coming to meetings halfway through, and they were clearly just like going along, you know what I mean? Going along to get along, you could say. So, their [students'] voices I don't think are really strongly heard. (Tape 19, pp. 7-8)

The same participant indicated that, whereas the university creates opportunities for students to engage in dialogue about other important university issues affecting students, the same is not true for alcohol. This is a missed opportunity for both the university and the students, according to this same participant:

I think to a large degree that people [university officials] try to include students in some of the other issues....Like for instance, the tuition increase now is a really big issue, and when you read it in the [student newspaper], it looks like there is an opportunity for students to come out and voice their opinions....I don't think it's the same when it comes to the alcohol issue. We [the participant's department] do it because we're required to do it....We try



to get an understanding of...students' alcohol use and what they feel about the culture here around alcohol and policies and those kinds of things....At the same time, you wonder how much we really want to hear from students. Are we doing it just to scratch that off the list?....To me there's no need listening to students unless you're going to do something with what you hear.

Otherwise, you're wasting their time and your time....Again, particularly around alcohol, no, students are not consulted or asked their opinions or anything like that around alcohol policies. (Tape 19, pp. 9-10)

Historically, student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development at this university has been relatively nonexistent, according to another participant. This lack of student participation has resulted in a general lack of awareness among students about university, student, and collaborative university/student alcohol programs and initiatives:

We have never had strong student leadership commitment to the alcohol education program....The first year we did [Mascot] Nights, we tried desperately to get [student government] leadership to be models and show up. They'd go out of their way to run the other direction, quite frankly....There are students on the [Alcohol] Task Force...but it's old enough now that it doesn't get regular recognition. The fact that they [students] are pretty much the sponsor of [Mascot] Nights would fall on deaf ears. I suspect that if you asked student leaders who puts on [Mascot] Nights, they'd tell you that the university does. They probably wouldn't think about [Mascot] Nights having some student involvement. (Tape 12, p. 11)

Another participant provided a metaphor related to the importance student participation in alcohol-related policy development, which first results in greater student ownership, which then results in better policy adherence by students:

It [not involving students in alcohol-related policy development] would be like making a policy for the Olympic committee without the Olympic committee knowing until afterward. I think you can only benefit from student involvement because the alcohol policies are for the students. You have to get students to buy-in in order for the alcohol policies to be adhered to as well as enforced....So, I don't know why you wouldn't include students [in alcohol-related policy development]. (Tape 22, p. 13)

#### **Additional Participant Perceptions and Constructions**

In assessing the participants' individual and collective awareness of the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, it was clear the administrators were familiar with the programs and initiatives, particularly familiar with and supportive of the Mascot Nights program. This statement by one participant characterized most accurately the various administrators' opinions of the Mascot Night program: "[Mascot] Nights is a noble effort, but it's like preaching to the choir" (Tape 11, p. 3). Said differently, another administrator echoed the same thought: "I don't know that we [the university] are reaching, through [Mascot] Nights, the people [students] we need to reach" (Tape 16, p. 4). Another participant offered the same predilection:

[Mascot] Nights have been a lot of nice events, some having pretty good attendance, etc. By and large, students who are regular drinkers aren't participating [in Mascot Nights]. I don't know that we've impacted the

people [students] who imbibe regularly. I doubt if we've impacted there.

(Tape 21, p. 7)

Although few opinions differed significantly on which students were participating in and being affected most by the Mascot Nights program, the simple fact that the programs are offered as an on-campus alternative to the bar scene is enough benefit to sustain, if not expand, the current Mascot Nights program, according to another participant:

I think that programs like [Mascot] Nights are excellent programs. I think that there should be a lot more of them. It really gives [students] an alternative.

Now on the downside...people [university officials] say the only people [students] who come to those are people [students] who wouldn't go to the bars anyway. Initially, that may be true. If you're providing really quality entertainment, people [students] will come. Whether they drink before they come or whether they drink after they leave or whether they don't drink at all, it's the option that you have to provide. If you don't...then you're pretty much guaranteeing that you're putting people [students] in situations where there is alcohol and drinking going on. Or, you force people [students] to leave this campus because they can't socialize in a manner in which they choose to. (Tape 23, p. 4)

Another participant articulated the "preaching to the choir" phenomenon of the current Mascot Nights programs, but offered support for an expanded Mascot Nights program – one that could compete equally and effectively with the local community bar scene. However, this participant stated that an expanded program would require additional

institutional funding and additional funding would require the Mascot Nights program to be elevated in the hierarchy of institutional priorities:

I see [Mascot] Nights as very good, a great start. It provides a good opportunity [for students]. Unfortunately, I think it's a little bit of preaching to the choir type thing....Some of the programming for [Mascot] Nights may be more appealing to those who already choose to drink responsibly. With enough money and support from the university, I would hope that there would be additional programming that would cut across that and be of enough interest to draw even those [students] who traditionally choose not to drink responsibly. In other words, make [Mascot Nights] attractive enough to compete effectively with the community. That's what I think is necessary for a successful program. The university would like to see itself...in the next decade prove the value of a residential experience....We want to promote an environment for healthy, good fun, camaraderie, [and] socializing....In looking at the programming for [Mascot] Nights...what's attractive to folks [students] other than alcohol? What do they do? Well, there are bands, the music scene. Why can't we do that on campus? With enough money, we could be doing that at the union....We could be doing stuff that would be just as attractive as the community scene and allow the students to do it in a safe environment, a safer environment. The incongruency that I see is the dollars. If indeed it [Mascot Nights] is a priority, where are the dollars? Let's make it happen. (Tape 24, pp. 2-3)

Another participant supported the current Mascot Nights program, but conjectured on additional benefits to the program if it were to expand to include more community-based events. Currently, the majority of programs are held on campus, and this participant asserted that collaborating with the community might be an answer to some of the identity and visibility challenges associated with the existing Mascot Nights program:

I love [Mascot] Nights. I think it's great programming, and I wish more students would attend and take advantage of them. I think the committee they have working on it and their ideas have been great. I think, again, that is another area where a lot of joint collaboration with the community could be done. During [orientation] week, we usually do it [Mascot Nights] with the [city] pool. There are venues that are in town and could be used for non-alcoholic functions...like that old warehouse. It's really cool inside and I don't know if they have food or not, but you can cater events and do a lot of different things. I think that venue would be an excellent place to have a [Mascot] Night event. What a great place where they could do some collaboration and have a band come in....I think there's a lot of opportunity for collaborative efforts [with the community]. (Tape 3, pp. 21-22)

Another participant commented on the growing popularity of the Mascot Nights program among students and the "awesome effort" from program organizers to challenge the norm by having Mascot Nights on some nights that historically are known for heavy student drinking:

[Mascot] Nights has been growing in popularity. Attendance has steadily gotten better. I think that's an awesome effort, one of the best I've seen on

any campus in terms of trying to put forth a good effort for a non-alcoholic event during a prime night for partying. It's been creative. It's catching on. (Tape 13, pp. 3-4)

The Alcohol Task Force was the subject of much discussion with the administrator participants. Surprisingly, when asked to talk about the Alcohol Task Force, some administrators simply were unaware of its role, functions, or who served on it. One administrator replied candidly, "I know nothing about the university's Alcohol Task Force, nothing at all" (Tape 22, p. 3). Another administrator commented rather flippantly, "I have absolutely no idea what they [the Alcohol Task Force] do" (Tape 11, p. 3). Another participant, who claimed to have no knowledge of the Alcohol Task Force, attributed it perhaps to being new to the university or perhaps a reflection of the Task Force's level of activity:

I don't know about the Alcohol Task Force. I really can't speak to it. I don't know if there's a functioning one. If it is, to my knowledge, we [the participant's department] don't have anyone on it. All my [professional] staff have myriad numbers of appointments that are carryover from before I got here, so I may not be real familiar. I'm not aware of what, if anything, they're doing right now. I think I would be, should be, [aware of the Task Force] if it was very active. (Tape 13, p. 4)

One participant, who serves on the Alcohol Task Force, had a difficult time pinpointing the role, goals, or objectives of the Task Force. This participant surmised that the lack of activity of the Alcohol Task Force could be a result of it having no real goals or

objectives. This participant also speculated that the Task Force could be merely “window dressing” for the university:

I don't know what role it [the Alcohol Task Force] has on campus...[Is the Task Force] strictly just like window dressing for the [president] and the upper administration? We're just this group that gets together and just talks about things. We don't go out and do things....There was a perfect opportunity where we had an idea from someone who was on our committee and half of the committee members shot it down...“Well, let's not do this; let's just keep walking the same line we've been walking.” I think that we ought to try to take a chance on some of those things, try some new things and hopefully, things work. And if they don't, we can say we did. But right now that's not happening. (Tape 6, pp. 3-4)

Another participant, who serves on the Alcohol Task Force but no longer attends meetings, was uncertain of the role, function, and overall direction of the Task Force, suggesting that it may be “struggling” to answer those same questions:

I've been on the Alcohol Task Force. This year I have not attended any [Task Force] meetings. I found that they weren't very helpful to me, and I wasn't really contributing that much, so I've limited my time on that. I don't know if that group is part of [university] decision making or policy making. They [the Task Force] seem to be struggling themselves with exactly what's going on. (Tape 17, p. 1)

Initial high hopes and subsequent disappointments characterized another participant's experience with the Alcohol Task Force. A member of the Alcohol Task Force, this

participant hoped the vision and mission of Task Force would include philosophy and policy development, human and educational resource sharing, and alternative programming. But nothing happened, according to this participant, because of a lack of leadership:

When I initially came to this position, and then hearing that the [Alcohol] Task Force had been put in place, I guess it was my thoughts that, great, that's going to be a group of folks who would pretty much help create whatever the alcohol philosophy is, or will be, here on campus. That committee will give direction not only to alternative activity here, but also to just what the overall vibe's going to be about alcohol on campus. What are the resources going to be that are going to be set aside and maybe various departments on campus to address this issue? How can we use all of those different people who are at the table who have different types of alcohol prevention and some treatment responsibility? How can we use that organization or that committee to make sure everybody knew what everyone else was doing and how we could share in promoting whatever the vision was for alcohol at [the university]? But it didn't. I guess I was a little bit more hopeful that the vision for it would not have been as narrow as it turned out to be.... You know, there were a lot of really, maybe I shouldn't say, powerful, but influential people [on the Task Force]. There were a lot of key stakeholders on it that could get a lot of things done. But, I think, first of all, people were looking for leadership.... Nobody's going to do anything additional for their job unless somebody is either going to get them motivated to do it, pay them to do it, or provide some kind of great



leadership that you just want to be involved in it. And that didn't happen. I just kind of thought this [the Task Force] is really a waste. (Tape 19, p. 4)

Another participant commented on the ineffectiveness of the university's alcohol education efforts in general and the unresponsiveness from members of the Alcohol Task Force in particular:

I think that our alcohol education efforts are so scattered that they're ineffective. The campus Alcohol Task Force? I have absolutely no idea what they do. If they were smart they'd get the Alcohol 101 disk and put out an alcohol web page so that parents could see that we [the university] are trying to do something positive. Bored students who are always surfing the web could see it [Alcohol 101]....I was looking at some other school for something else and I bumped onto it. I sent it to a couple of places where I thought it might be helpful here at [the university] to say, gosh, have you guys seen this? It's free! All you have to do is ask for it....Nobody's ever acknowledged the e-mail. So, I don't know what the Alcohol Task Force does. (Tape 11, p. 3)

Another participant was not familiar with who currently is serving on the Alcohol Task Force, but speculated that the "right people" may not be:

I don't know who's on the Alcohol Task Force now. I think it's mostly student affairs folks and students. I don't think all the right people are at the Task Force, at that table. But I also think that other forces have intervened, for example, in the tailgating matter. Such that we are just sending tremendous mixed messages to students now that we are not even following

the spirit of the Task Force, much less the letter of its recommendations.

(Tape 10, p. 5)

This participant knew “nothing at all” about the Alcohol Task Force, including its current membership. As a result of the interview, this participant became aware that indeed the Task Force had no representation from Greek Programs staff or students. According to this participant, to have no direct involvement from the Greek community on the Alcohol Task Force was illogical given the national research on alcohol abuse among college students:

I know nothing about the university’s Alcohol Task Force, nothing at all....I think someone from the Greek programs staff needs to be on the Alcohol Task Force. I don’t know that research has been done here at [the university], but I mean, national research would tell you that fraternities and sororities need to be 1) reached as far as alcohol use and abuse [education and prevention], and 2) if nothing else, they [fraternities and sororities] could be leaders of things that we [the university] are trying to implement. And I think that [Greek programs staff or student involvement] is an important component for the Alcohol Task Force. (Tape 22, p. 3)

The Alcohol Task Force not only has no representation from the Greek Programs staff or students, but representation from social normative marketing campaign has dwindled. One participant mentioned, “I have not seen the social norms campaign person at our Alcohol Task Force meeting in probably well over, literally 4 to 6 months” (Tape 6, p. 2). Another participant referred to the once close association between the social normative

marketing campaign and the Alcohol Task Force having changed, and now the two simply “coexist.”

Initially, the group [the Alcohol Task Force] worked closely with the representatives of the social norms campaign to get an understanding of what they were doing and to make some suggestions that would perhaps allow us to cooperate a little more closely. I guess the largest outcome of that has been the birthday card that was supposed to be starting in September that has now been moved back to January 1 of 2002. I think there's been a little bit of a struggle there, too. I don't know that the two programs [Alcohol Task Force and social normative marketing campaign] have merged in a good way or blended in a cooperative way. They kind of coexist. (Tape 16, pp. 3-4)

Increasing student input and involvement in the Alcohol Task Force was cited by another participant as an initial step to increase the effectiveness of the Task Force. Currently, there is little or no student input and no official student representation on the Alcohol Task Force. Approaching different types of students with different drinking habits also may yield some unforeseen benefits to the Task Force, according to this participant:

It [the Alcohol Task Force] has no student input; student input is the most important thing. We're making recommendations right now on ways we can and things that we can do to improve the Task Force. The two things that I will be bringing to the Task Force is to have a vice chair appointed so, if the chair is ever not there, that we can still continue meetings and not go a month or two months [without meeting]; and to have official student representation on the board, be it 3, 5, 7 students. And they [students] could be random.

They could be students from certain living communities...fraternities, sororities, sports clubs, international student organization, [or] the student union [programming board]. And get some students who are actually going out quite a bit and drinking 15 beers a night instead of 0 to 5....We need student representation on the Alcohol Task Force definitely. (Tape 6, p. 6)

In a follow-up discussion with this same participant, frustrations regarding the Alcohol Task Force's infrequent and inconsistent meeting schedule surfaced. Canceling meetings with little or no notice and failing to reschedule them has frustrated this participant who is "trying to make a difference and help students" with the problem of alcohol abuse:

I have not been to a Task Force meeting here all semester. We [the Alcohol Task Force] did not meet in January [2002]....I do not know if we met or not [in February], as we do not get minutes from the meetings. Our March meeting was canceled, not postponed, because of the [conference basketball tournament], and our April meeting was just canceled without any notification. I understand how important basketball is...I love basketball. But we could have moved the meeting up a few days so it would have been a win-win situation. As far as the April meeting, well, it was just canceled. I'm not sure why there was not any notification, but it just gets really frustrating when you want to deal with issues concerning alcohol, but you can't even get the group [the Alcohol Task Force] together to meet....I haven't even heard when or if we will have a meeting in May. It's just really frustrating trying to make a difference and help the students, but can't get the group together to meet. (Tape 6, p. 33)

Securing additional university funding and getting the right people to the table were cited by another participant as priorities for increasing the effectiveness of the Alcohol Task Force:

First of all is funding. They [upper administration] never give the Task Force any money. Go out and make recommendations! Don't do anything, just go out and make recommendations! Then you take recommendations, no matter how valid the recommendation may be...[and] you hand them to people who also have no money funded for this purpose. So, you're really left at the mercy of what the provost has available or what [the president] has available at any given time period. If you're not the "topic of the month," chances of getting funded are slim....You're always in competition [for funding], no matter how valid the information is....[Second], the right people are not at the table [on the Alcohol Task Force] and the right level is not at the table. I would say vice presidents, deans, and directors is the level you're talking about, for two reasons. One, the level of people shows the level of commitment by the university. The level of people also shows the resources available to that particular topic – the lower the people, the less resources, the less funding, the less they're going to get accomplished, etc. I think that there is probably several groups outside the university that should be [on the Alcohol Task Force] that aren't there....The county health department should be there. Probably [the local mental health agency] should be there because of what they bring. Also, I think probably [the local hospital] should be there.

Probably high level representation from the city should be there because we [the university] don't sell a lot of alcohol here on campus! (Tape 23, pp. 7-8)

The subject of parental notification, as a strategy to reduce illegal use and abuse of alcohol among college students, elicited strong opinions for and against such a policy from the administrator participants. Parental notification has been a topic of conversation among the university's student affairs staff, but this particular administrator was not supportive of it, citing initial data from another institution that implemented parental notification and experienced an increase in student alcohol violations. In addition, this same participant viewed parental notification as just one more way of threatening students:

It [parental notification] has been a brief conversation point, in that [the senior student affairs officer] has been very clear about it. [The senior student affairs officer] still believes that once a student has reached 18, they've reached the age of majority and that for the most part, they should be treated that way. And so notifying parents would not be consistent with that approach. One school that I'm aware of is the University of Delaware, which was the first one to kind of move in that direction in a real public way, and say [to students] if you do that, your parents are going to know. The data from that school have basically increased. I'm not one to put a whole lot into that. I think it's probably a fluctuation over time and the actual effect is zero – no significant increase one way or the other. So, I don't know that it [parental notification] is a particularly effective way [of affecting change in students]. We've threatened people [students] before in all kinds of different ways. (Tape 16, p. 7)

Another administrator strongly opposed parental notification, referring to it as a practice of “blabbing to the parents” and one that erodes the relationship between the university and its students:

When that [parental notification] law was passed, I was glad that [the university] decided not to do it [implement a parental notification policy]. It puts the university in the role of the police, the tattlers, big brother is watching you, we can get back to your money source, cut you off, or whatever. I’m of the belief that if you’re on campus and you’re a college student, and most of our students are 18 or older, that once you become 18 you’re an adult; you’re responsible for yourself. To me it [parental notification] is almost a breach of confidentiality to have to go blabbing to the parents. (Tape 17, p. 6)

Another administrator insisted that parental notification was appropriate, and unlike the concern of other administrators, did not consider it a reversal to *in loco parentis*. When asked specifically for an opinion on parental notification, this administrator responded, “I like that [parental notification]. I don’t think we [the university] are necessarily going back to *in loco parentis* by doing that. I think that’s a good idea on second and third violations. I don’t know about first violations” (Tape 22, p. 10).

Another participant supported parental notification, at least “limited notification,” yet noted the senior student affairs officer’s objection that parental notification would be contrary to the university’s position on *in loco parentis*. Additionally, this participant speculated that student awareness of such a policy might alone be enough to deter some problematic behavior:

I'd like to have us do parent notification, [the senior students affairs officer] would not....It's a long-run philosophy that comes out of not wanting to assume the responsibility of parents for our students. The objections to it [parental notification] have been very practical ones, and we [the university] don't know about violations that occur off campus, so all we can tell parents about are violations that occur on campus. I think that even limited notification would be helpful, and I think that telling students that we will let their parents know of violations might, in and of itself, produce a little temperance in student behavior [related to alcohol]. I think it's worth a try.

(Tape 10, p. 9)

Not responding directly for or against parental notification policies, this participant contended that there is little likelihood the university would adopt such a policy given its prevailing philosophy of students as responsible and, in most cases, legally independent adults:

I don't see parental notification happening easily at [the university]. I don't see that as a priority. [The university] views the student as a responsible, maybe not always responsible, but at least a legally independent adult in their decision-making process. I think [the university] goes out of its way to protect that....The primary responsibility [of the university] is to the student, and we have a parent that is a consumer of our services as well. (Tape 24, p. 9)

Another participant suggested that the effectiveness of parental notification policies have less to do with the actual policies and more to do with the level of responsibility parents



are willing to assume in the lives of their students. This administrator offered an analogy of a real-life scenario of a suicidal student:

Parental notification would stop some of them [student alcohol violations].

It's not going to stop all of them because the parents have very different reactions to this [being notified]. I just talked to a parent the other day who was outraged that the residence halls asked their suicidal daughter, who is causing havoc on her floor, to adhere to behavioral standards or they [residence hall staff] were going to remove her from the hall. Parental notification would work if you had a responsible parent. (Tape 11, p. 7)

Several of the administrator participants discussed faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives as another opportunity to positively influence students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. According to this participant, previous efforts to engage the faculty of this university in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives have not been successful. However, this same participant speculated that a more intentional, concerted effort to engage faculty might work, and if faculty became involved in large numbers, they could make a difference:

I think it [faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives] would have some effect if we could get the faculty, in large numbers, engaged in this. Students do pay attention to faculty. I've made lots of individual efforts to get the faculty involved....I've made university-wide presentations that alcohol is not just a problem for students, it's a problem for faculty as well. In our thousand full-time faculty, there's always a handful for whom it [student alcohol abuse] is a serious problem.

I've never had many faculty express a willingness to get involved or seen faculty on their own get involved; I see just the opposite. I see faculty spend a lot of time joking about alcohol, that the appropriate thing for students to do on the weekend is to go out and get bashed. I've got a feeling that the references to alcohol that occur in the classroom, except in those classes dealing with it as a problem, are more light-hearted joking and perhaps encouraging bad behaviors. I don't know how to get faculty involved. It's not for want of talking, trying to get something going....A really concerted effort to try to get faculty involved, I think that might make a difference.

(Tape 10, p. 7)

The final issue that surfaced among some administrators was the overabundance of alcohol-related advertising in the campus student newspaper. Freedom of speech issues aside, the university has to "put its money where its mouth is" when it suggests to the student newspaper staff that they consider eliminating alcohol advertisements. The university cannot expect the student newspaper to absorb all the revenue that would be lost with such a decision; the university would have to subsidize some of it, according to this administrator:

I have problems with the [student newspaper] accepting advertising for bars. I think that's one of the discussions that needed to be had that did not occur.

We understand that there is a revenue issue for advertising with the [student newspaper]. However, if the university is trying to curtail [alcohol] consumption, and if the student body leadership is in agreement with this, it seems to me that it's inappropriate for the student newspaper to, every Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday, run ads about specials at

different bars off campus....During an Alcohol Task Force [meeting]...that particular topic came up about advertising on campus and in the [student newspaper]....Nobody wanted to commit the funding that would be necessary to say not only are we not going to run these types of ads anymore, but we're [also] going to commit funds so you [the student newspaper] don't take the total hit. We will subsidize you in order to put out a more positive message. Instead, we've got the social norms ad here next to a dollar pitcher ad for someplace. Talk about a mixed message. (Tape 23, p. 6)

### **Faculty Constituency**

#### **Perceptions of Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruence**

The faculty participants were asked to articulate the university's philosophy on alcohol and their responses varied significantly: "I don't know that [the university] has an overarching philosophy related to alcohol" (Tape 21, p. 1); "I'm not sure that there is a philosophy [on alcohol]. I think there are regulations and practices" (Tape 31, p. 1); "The university has developed a very explicit philosophy [on alcohol], as I understand it" (Tape 25, p. 1); and "I believe it [the university's philosophy on alcohol] is formal and supported in appropriate university documents accordingly" (Tape 2, p. 1).

Reducing underage alcohol consumption and promoting responsible alcohol use were the themes of one participant's description of the university's philosophy on alcohol:

My understanding is that, first of all, the university is concerned about underage drinking. The university believes that it has a responsibility to promote responsible [alcohol] use. It's a realistic philosophy; we're not going to stop students from drinking. We can do what we can to provide alternative

outlets, but we need to at least recognize the reality, not encourage drinking, but that they [students] are out there drinking and what can we do to make them more responsible?....The education piece is to let students know that binge drinking, excessive drinking, is not and does not have to be part of the college experience [and] that it's a responsible piece that we're after. (Tape 26, p. 1)

Another participant described the university's philosophy on alcohol in terms of the university's opposition to excess alcohol consumption:

[The university] is certainly opposed to it [alcohol consumption] in excess; I'm not sure about the [university's] attitude on moderation. There are restrictions on drinking on campus and limitations on what can be done there, which would signal that there is some opposition to it [alcohol consumption]. (Tape 14, p. 1)

Similar to the philosophy of opposition to excess alcohol consumption, one participant described the university's philosophy related to alcohol as "zero tolerance" for alcohol abuse:

The philosophy, as I understand it, is zero tolerance for alcohol abuse....There has been, in more recent years, a grave concern about the degree to which there is underage drinking and...[regardless of who] drinks, [even] legal age drinkers, there are negative consequences in terms of their [students'] own behavior, illegal behavior, safety issues, etc. That has motivated the university to take a much more assertive view of what the ranges of tolerance with appropriate drinking are. (Tape 25, p. 1)

Another participant was uncertain if an “overarching” university philosophy on alcohol existed, but spoke of the university’s “party” reputation, prevention initiatives directed at fraternities, and emphasis on responsible alcohol use:

I don’t know that they [the university] have an overarching philosophy related to alcohol. I do know that there is concern of the perception that this is a pretty hard-partying school and that some efforts have been undertaken to reduce that. I also know that there have been a lot of efforts around the reduction and elimination of alcohol in the fraternity houses because that’s certainly, I think, where a lot of the bad stuff goes on. As far as an overarching philosophy [on alcohol], I don’t think there’s a zero tolerance campaign. I think there’s a real push towards responsible use. (Tape 21, p. 1)

Some participants spoke specifically of the university’s philosophy on alcohol as having become increasingly conflicted and hypocritical due to the recent decision to allow on-campus tailgating with alcohol in conjunction with football games. One of them stated, “To have this official university statement of no alcohol on campus, etc. and then to make it so clear that tailgating [with alcohol] is an essential part of the football season. That was so bad it was almost funny, really kind of pathetic” (Tape 31, p. 1). Another participant said:

I think our overall philosophy [on alcohol] is one that sends a lot of mixed messages to students because we are encouraging students to limit their amount of drinking, and yet at the same time, we [the university] allow drinking now in the parking lot pre-game and post-game for football games. We allow drinking in the suites at the [football] stadium, at selected places on the campus, so we’re a little bit hypocritical in that regard. I just see us [the

university] primarily as sending a lot of mixed messages [about alcohol] to the students. (Tape 30, p. 1)

Another participant mentioned that “there was a slight chip in that armor [philosophy on alcohol] when the university allowed tailgating and the use of alcohol before some of the football games” (Tape 29, p. 1). This same participant characterized the university’s policies on alcohol as hypocritical and inconsistent given the exceptions that are made concerning when and where alcohol can be consumed on campus:

If there’s going to be a policy about the use of alcohol on university grounds and in university facilities, then it seems to me the policy should be consistent and should be consistently enforced....When we [the university] begin to allow an exception, such as for football games, then it strikes me that the justification for the exception was purely capitalistic. If you allow that kind of justification to apply to football, then let me ask why it does not apply to the sale of alcohol at the [performing arts venues] before theater? Because it’s customary in every theater that I’ve been to, and I’ve been to them in several countries, to allow people to purchase [alcoholic] drinks before theater and at intermission. If it is customary for football and then for theater, why is it not customary on a Friday afternoon for faculty to have a colloquial followed by the serving of alcohol in university facilities, as is customary at many universities in this country....In other words, where does the exception begin? I know where it begins; it begins in the need to fill the football stadium. Where does it end? I don’t know where it ends. I’m not sure that it will be extended, but the exception is based upon a commercial interest. Other

exceptions, would they be based upon a commercial interest?....Where do we [the university] go with all of this? We're either going to have a policy [on alcohol] and articulated exceptions that are either on a commercial or other basis, or we should not have the exceptions. (Tape 29, pp. 1-2)

Excluding the decision to allow on-campus tailgating with alcohol, another participant maintained that the university's policies related to alcohol, as written, are clear and consistent. This participant inferred that any inconsistent messages about alcohol are the byproducts of incongruent "deeds" or practices by university officials:

The messages [about alcohol] are perfectly clear in writing. It's sort of the difference between words and deeds. I expect that a lot of folks you talk to might have had slightly different attitudes before this whole football and tailgating [with alcohol] business. I don't see any variation in written statements or official statements coming out of student affairs. (Tape 31, p. 7)

This perspective was shared by another participant who said, "I believe the [alcohol] policy is congruent with the philosophy [on alcohol], but the practice does not support the policy" (Tape 2, p. 3).

Another participant commented that there are inconsistent and incongruent institutional messages related to alcohol because the university does not attempt to control the messages that are sent and perhaps the university should:

Thinking about the students I know and talk to, they don't get consistent messages [about alcohol] because [the university] doesn't control every message they get. So, they get a message from their parents that [the university] doesn't control. They get a message from the larger community

out there that [the university] doesn't control. I know that my...students who go to bars, because that's the place where they'll meet other [students like themselves], they get a total other message [about alcohol]. So, there are no – whatever [the university] is trying to do – consistent messages and I don't think that works. (Tape 21, p. 5)

### **ARIC and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol**

When discussing the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, the majority of faculty participants agreed that there is a relationship and framed their comments in terms of incongruence versus congruence. One participant commented that any incongruence or mixed message related to alcohol gives students an easy out. "Because there are mixed messages [about alcohol], they [students] choose to read the message the way that they want to read it" (Tape 26, p. 11). Another participant believed that the effect of alcohol-related institutional incongruence on students is simple; it does not discourage them from drinking or abusing alcohol. A student focus group revealed to this same participant that the university's efforts to curb alcohol abuse and related problems among the students were not effective:

I think it [alcohol-related institutional incongruence] has the effect of not discouraging them [students] from drinking. We had a focus group with a number of students, I think five or six. We talked to them about alcohol consumption on campus. Then I went back to [my former department] and we took five students...and talked about it. In the course of those two groups, it confirmed for me that alcohol consumption is a serious, serious problem on



this campus. The students said that there wasn't anything that we [the university] were doing or saying that was having any impact. (Tape 30, p. 1)

However, another participant, when asked if alcohol-related institutional congruence matters, replied that it does not, yet insisted that alcohol-related institutional congruence should be one goal of the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives:

That's a complex question. I'd say, basically, it [alcohol-related institutional congruence] doesn't matter, but you still want to try to do it. The reason I think that it doesn't matter is that there's peer pressure, the opportunity; there's the legacy of what they've brought from high school in this generation; there's the perceived hypocrisy of the athletic thing [tailgating with alcohol and other alcohol policy exceptions for athletics]; there's the perceived hypocrisy of just their parents' generation of don't do what I'm doing sort of thing; there's the freedom of going to college and all that entails and invites. If it [alcohol-related institutional congruence] does have an effect, I think this was the goal of the norms report [social normative marketing campaign] to tell people [students] that to be one of the group, quote unquote, you don't have to drink 20 drinks because the group is drinking four or five. (Tape 2, pp. 9-10)

Although alcohol-related institutional congruence is a desirable goal, another participant asserted that there are limits to the effects of this congruence on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol because of all the tremendous social forces that affect students:

The thing that worries me a little bit about the consistency notion around human behavior is that it seems very linear. It assumes a cause and effect [relationship]. If we have this message, [then] it will have an influence on X. It isn't that it [alcohol-related institutional congruence] doesn't have any influence. With almost all human behavior, there are so many contingencies and so much sheer luck and accident, and certainly in this case tremendous social forces – cultural norms, family norms, religious norms, etc. – it seems to me unlikely that one institution, however strong it might be and central to a student's life, would have all the chips in its pail. It's important for the university to specify according to its own vision of education, its mission, its ethics, etc., desirable norms on campus.... We [the university] say we don't accept, I would phrase it, alcohol abuse, but it's really alcohol use for the underage. Those are important messages to put out there. It is important, in terms of our own university integrity, to act in the most consistent way possible with that message.... The internal consistency is important. At the same time, I don't think we [the university] should put ourselves in a position of imagining that if the university is consistent, then students will radically change their personal drinking behavior. Collectively, you might see some improvements, but individually, one is still going to see alcohol abuse because we see it in our culture. It's not unlike the incredible public health campaign around smoking. Who, 15-20 years ago, would have thought that there would be people who wouldn't smoke and wouldn't be allowed to smoke on planes for a 12-hour trip? It would have been unthinkable.... We [society] do seem to

have the collective power that is larger than the university. It's really a cultural, social authority or capacity, to re-norm a behavior. I think we should take a lesson from...the anti-smoking campaign. I wouldn't carry it, in this case, to the anti-drinking extreme, but certainly to reasonable, moderate, health-positive drinking practices. (Tape 25, pp. 8-9)

Another participant believed that alcohol-related institutional congruence has little effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Moreover, a hierarchy of influence exists, and the higher-level hierarchical influences have a much greater impact on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. University influences are not among students' higher-level hierarchical influences, according to this participant:

I don't think that they [students] think a lot about what the university does regarding alcohol. I think it [alcohol consumption] is very peer-oriented. Going to bars is part of college life, a big part of many students' college lives, and I don't think that's influenced by the [alcohol-related] congruence issue. I don't know, but I would imagine that students sort of lump adults, faculty, school, [and] parents into a generic category that generally discourages too much drinking. I would think that [the university], as an institution, is probably third [in order of influence]. I'd imagine first is peers, second is family, and third is [the university]....I would think that their [students'] tendency to drink is higher than the university's condoning of drinking....So I would think they [students] would mostly see the university, even if it does tolerate some alcohol use at various places, as being an essentially

conservative place, essentially a force for limiting alcohol use. (Tape 20, pp. 3-4)

Because of the significant impact of peer influence, another faculty participant discussed that students' peers, particularly their close friends, will "break the tie" if students are conflicted about what is or what is not acceptable regarding alcohol. If the institution's alcohol message is mixed or incongruent, students will look to their closest friends for answers, remarked this participant:

Well, it's going to take something else to break the tie [between what is and is not acceptable regarding alcohol]. You know what I mean? It's going to take some other influence out there to break the tie, and I suspect that the influence [of closest friends] is going to be there....Not the so-called formal peer system, but their true friends, their true contemporaries, their buds. (Tape 21, p. 6)

Another participant addressed the issue of students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol not as an alcohol-related institutional congruence issue, but an issue of college students' collective need to break rules. According to this participant, the only rules left to break are alcohol-related:

The whole concept of an alcohol culture at [the university], isn't it an alcohol culture in higher education? It's a nation-wide thing which probably would not be very significant if there weren't all kinds of elaborate prohibitions.... As soon as you get into a culture that says [alcohol] is evil, then the kids [students] have got to challenge....I sometimes feel a little sorry for the kids. They can't have any innocent fun being bad or breaking rules because there

aren't any rules left to break. The few rules left to break are the alcohol rules.

There aren't even any sexual cohabitation rules left. There are so few rules left to break. They [students] have got to have some bragging rights for something, even if it's for a number of beers. (Tape 31, p. 6)

The social normative marketing campaign was mentioned as a source of alcohol-related institutional incongruence, particularly for underage students. The effect of this incongruence on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol is dissonance, according to this participant:

If there is any kind of lack of congruence as far as within our [the university's] own [alcohol] policies toward students who are underage, it may be in the fact that we do say you shouldn't drink, but yet we have the social norms campaign. There's a philosophy here that is incongruent....There's this acceptance piece, and while that's realistic, it does create a certain level of dissonance. (Tape 26, pp. 1-2)

Another alcohol-related institutional congruence issue surfaced among the participants that can affect students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol – faculty members and students socializing together with alcohol. Although there are no explicit university prohibitions, faculty members drinking with students sends not only mixed messages about alcohol, it is “stupid” in the judgment of this participant:

Well, I'll tell you, any faculty member who would go out or invite a student to his or her home and drink liquor is dumb as a post because if that kid goes out and does something terrible, and it is revealed that they were last drinking with a faculty member, forget it....Not even a possibility! And, I don't know,

we do have these new faculty orientations that come up and I'm always asked to talk about something. I'll do whatever they tell me, but you know what, if they told me to talk about students and alcohol, I'd say to them [new faculty], don't be stupid, don't you be stupid! (Tape 21, p. 15)

Another participant had a more liberal interpretation of faculty members and students socializing together with alcohol and implied there was little effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol as long as the alcohol consumption was moderate. However, for a faculty member to become intoxicated with a student would be inappropriate, according to this participant:

My sense is that there's not a lot of it [faculty and students socializing together with alcohol]. There may be a little bit of it and my sense is it probably is, whenever it does go on, I would imagine very moderate....I think over the 30 years I've been here, I could maybe count a half dozen times when there's been some alcohol sharing between me and students, and I think that's okay. And if other people [faculty] have students over and offer them a beer or something like that, as long as it's one, then I think alcohol is serving its appropriate purpose as a social lubricant. I think for a professor to be intoxicated with students or to encourage that is wrong and would be inappropriate. I think there's a little bit of younger faculty and GTAs eating with students in bars and that's all right. (Tape 20, p. 13)

#### **Student Participation in ARPPD and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol**

When asked if student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development has an effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, the

majority of faculty participants answered affirmatively. Before that can happen, however, there need to be honest, candid conversations with students, particularly student leaders, about alcohol -related issues, according to one participant:

One thing that I think students really appreciate is just the honesty from administrators and faculty about some of these [alcohol-related] issues. I'm sure we [the university] need to engage ourselves in conversations with students about this issue....Students told us if we could get two or three of the juniors and seniors [who are leaders] to say this [the problem of alcohol abuse among college students] is crazy, it [the message] would flow right down and they [other students] would all fall upon it. (Tape 30, p. 6)

Another participant offered an analogy of the importance of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development to a fundamental philosophical approach associated with this participant's academic discipline:

I wouldn't do anything affecting the students without the students. [Not involving students in alcohol-related policy and program development] is a recipe for rebellion, non-compliance, and other forms of disaster. I simply don't believe that matters affecting student life should be imposed from above. There's an old saying in the [specific academic discipline] field: "Nothing about me without me." I'd say the same thing with respect to student life – nothing about the students without the students. (Tape 29, p. 8)

Similarly, another participant asserted that whereas student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development is desirable, a shortcoming of most policy-making groups is a general failure to involve adequately the primary receivers of the policies:

I have to say that [adequately involving the primary receivers of the policies] is always a shortcoming of almost every policy-making group....Policy, most often, is created to direct other people and those people, the receivers of the policies, are never, hardly ever, involved adequately. I assume some students are on the [Alcohol] Task Force; I honestly don't know. It was my impression that early on that there were some direct attempts to involve students and to talk with them. Whether it was really involving them in policy development or just giving them education about alcohol, I don't know. In my view, it [involving students in alcohol-related policy development] is desirable. It's a good policy practice to involve the consumers of the policy. They're the ones who know about it; they see it from the inside; they are very helpful shapers of policy. If they also become stakeholders, they are more likely to influence their peers. (Tape 25, p. 7)

Another participant asserted that there is a positive correlation between the level of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and the effect of that participation on the student's attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol – the greater the level of student involvement, the greater the effect on the student:

I think it [student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development] does have an effect. I think it's a continuum. If they [students] are participating, I think hearing other ideas and frames of reference and seeing adults [university officials] who care about them have an effect. If they're a student leader, it has a greater effect because they begin to see the complexity of the issue and the seriousness of it....Before [a specific student



leader] became president [of his fraternity], he probably didn't realize how much he was on the spot legally. If not legally, in a sense, organizationally. He wouldn't want to go to [the senior student affairs officer's] office after a drunken brawl or something as president and represent them [his fraternity]. To answer your question, it does have an effect. (Tape 2, p. 13)

Commenting specifically on student participation in alcohol-related peer education efforts, this participant questioned the effectiveness of such approaches in influencing students' attitudes and behaviors given the difference and "distance" between the students who are peer educators and the students they are attempting to educate:

They [peer educators] never really are peers. There's always kind of a distance between the person who's the so-called peer educator and the person who they're trying to educate. I mean, right away, you set up some kind of, you know, the educator and the educatee and usually this is not a person that people [students] feel compatible with. They [students] don't feel much of a connection with that person [peer educator]. (Tape 21, p. 4)

Although unable to comment specifically on the value of student participation in alcohol policy and program development, another participant commented on student participation in university and departmental committees and initiatives in general. This participant questioned the value of this level of student participation and implied that it may not be significantly different in alcohol-related matters:

Legally, it [student participation in university and departmental committees and initiatives] is required and I think somewhat perfunctory. I don't think anybody is actually working at it [student participation] other than the

university officials who dream these things up. We're required to have students on committees. I have yet to see them make a genuine impact. We have student representatives on department committees. They do not open their mouths, even when asked....I think if it makes people happy [having students participate in committees], let them do it....I'm sure that there are committees in which the students are very valuable; I simply am not on any of them. (Tape 31, p. 5)

Another participant, self-described as one who is "anti-student involvement" in university-wide committees and initiatives, commented that if student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development has any effect on students, the effect beyond those students involved directly is limited and does not last. "I don't think it [student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development] would have an effect for a very long time. I mean, if it did have an effect, it wouldn't be for a particularly long time" (Tape 21, p. 11).

### **Additional Participant Perceptions and Constructions**

An attempt was made to assess the faculty participants' awareness of the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives, specifically the Alcohol Task Force, the Mascot Nights program, and the social normative marketing campaign. Interestingly, only one participant was aware of the Alcohol Task Force, beyond knowing that it existed on campus; that participant is a member of the Task Force. When asked to discuss their awareness of the Alcohol Task Force and its role or function on campus, the other participants' responses included:

I am aware it [Alcohol Task Force] exists, but I'm not really aware that it continues to meet or what effectiveness it has. (Tape 20, p. 3)

Honestly, I don't know anything about it [Alcohol Task Force]. They really don't tell us what they do... We [faculty] really don't know what they do. (Tape 21, p. 3)

In a general way, I know that there is a [Alcohol] Task Force....I probably cannot trace any specific examples [of what it does]. (Tape 25, p. 2)

That [Alcohol Task Force] is the thing I'm least familiar with....I was probably a little familiar with the citywide task force. (Tape 26, p. 4)

I don't know about that [Alcohol Task Force] at all. (Tape 29, p. 4)

No, I'm not familiar with that [Alcohol Task Force]. (Tape 30, p. 2)

All I know is it [Alcohol Task Force] exists....I have not had anything to do with it. (Tape 31, p. 3)

The participants were equally unfamiliar with the Mascot Nights program. With the exception of one faculty member, all of the faculty participants either were completely unaware of the program or confused Mascot Nights with the university's fall orientation week program, as evidenced by this participant's inaccurate description:

[The purpose of Mascot Nights] is to get students together and to learn more about what's available at [the university]....The main point that I get out of it was it's designed to be educational [and for] social bonding to take place....Helping [students] in their early days on campus to get acclimated. (Tape 14, pp. 1-2)

The majority of participants knew very little about the university's social normative marketing campaign, referred to by some participants as the zero-to-five campaign, to reduce student binge/heavy episodic drinking and its harmful effects. When asked to comment on the social normative or zero-to-five campaign, one participant replied, "Never heard of it" (Tape 20, p. 3). Admitting to having little knowledge of the campaign's specifics, another participant agreed with the concept of the campaign:

I've seen the [social normative marketing campaign] signs on the back of the [campus] buses. I didn't know what campaign they were a part of. I think the signs are good reminders; they are to me. I suspect they are a good reminder to other faculty, staff, and students that you can have a drink, but there's a limit on what you should be drinking. (Tape 29, p. 4)

Another participant, who knew more about the social normative marketing campaign and its theoretical framework, agreed both with the concept of the campaign and its consistency with other university policies and programs related to alcohol:

Well, I know it [social normative marketing campaign] exists, obviously. I think that's a great campaign. I didn't really understand the theoretical underpinnings of it until I read about it in the [student] newspaper. I taught a class on alcohol and drugs....[and] it was surprising to me that students think that the goal here is to drink until you flop and that that is kind of normative, that you drink until you flop. So, when I first saw the billboard, you know the signs on the buses are sort of decontextualized, I couldn't understand why they were there. But I think it's a great idea and I do think it is very consistent with [other university alcohol-related policies and programs]. (Tape 21, p. 2)

The participant with the most direct knowledge of the social normative marketing campaign commented, "The social norms project has not really worked that well" (Tape 2, p. 4). However, this participant asserted that regardless of the campaign's effectiveness and the university's return on its investment, the university should continue, perhaps is obligated, to support this type of initiative. This same participant offered an analogy to support this position:

There was a study in Minnesota a few years ago about the effect of breakfast on children. Did a breakfast provided by the school help kids learn or something like that? It found that yeah, it did. But my view of that study was that it was a silly study because if it hadn't, if the results would have said that breakfasts aren't that important, would you have said, "Well then, don't serve breakfast?" No. From another frame of reference or value, doing programs like these [social normative marketing campaign] are absolutely necessary, regardless of the cost return on any kind of investment. The university should do it [social normative marketing campaign] to the greatest extent possible.

(Tape 2, pp. 5-6)

In a follow-up conversation, this same participant shared a copy of a direct quote from a student that had appeared in the March 6, 2002, issue of the campus student newspaper. This quote substantiated this participant's opinion that the social normative marketing campaign was not working well and that students were questioning the credibility of the campaign and the validity of the data. This student's quote follows:

Concerning the sign in [a specific residence hall] about one-night stands, that was probably published by the same group that published the [university]

student drinking habits. I once quoted that stat [average students at this university consume zero-to-five drinks when they party] in a speech class, and the audience laughed. If these groups [the social normative marketing campaign and others] want credibility they should stop hiding their research methods. They should submit to an academic review in totality. Instead they expect us [students] in blind faith to believe their lies.

When asked about increased faculty involvement in campus alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives as a strategy to reduce alcohol abuse among students, the faculty participants' opinions differed significantly. One participant viewed faculty involvement in these education and prevention initiatives as a central role for faculty, stating that "teaching about alcohol quintessentially is the mission of the university of its faculty" (Tape 29, p. 10). This same participant also referred to faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives as part of their moral obligation to students:

My sense of faculty duty is that we are to work on their [students'] minds as well as their hearts, on their intellect as well as on their behaviors. If we ourselves are the exemplars of good academic and intellectual work, we should also be good exemplars for social behavior. That's one reason I wear a tie to class every time I teach. It's a mark of respect to the students, a mark of respect for the topic, a mark of respect to the relationship. If it is a situation where the curriculum warrants a discussion [on alcohol], I would certainly expect the faculty member to adduce evidence on both sides of the argument with respect to the use of alcohol....If it is a matter of a faculty member seeing

a student wasting away because of alcohol abuse, I think the faculty member should, has a moral obligation to, talk with the student about the behavior and the consequences of the behavior, and should assist the student with getting whatever help the student may need. Ultimately, if the alcohol use is becoming so deleterious to the student that the student's academic status is in jeopardy, or health status is in jeopardy, then I think it's permissible for the faculty member to intervene rather actively. I've done that with respect to one student in the 21 years I've been here, and I'm glad that I did it. (Tape 29, pp. 6-7)

Although faculty could be more involved in the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, this participant asserted that faculty should not be the primary vehicle for "dealing with the problem" and offered examples of how faculty could be involved:

Well, I don't see it [increased faculty involvement] as a primary way of dealing with the [alcohol] problem [among students], but I think it could exist....I think there could be perhaps some small faculty involvement or a group of faculty getting together to talk about what's known about consciousness altering substances, the human psychology of consciousness altering, the things that these alternative substances do to you, and maybe informing each other about how that could be worked into different subject areas....So, I think we could do a little bit more to [improve] faculty understanding. I mean, we're supposed to know stuff and we know it medically, we know it psychologically, we know it sociologically. I might

have something to contribute from [specific academic discipline] and we could integrate ideas about it, disseminate those ideas to each other and to students, and help people [students] to think about how they are using their minds and their bodies a little more. (Tape 20, pp. 8-9)

Another participant was supportive of increased faculty involvement, specifically curriculum infusion of alcohol education and abuse prevention information:

I would be in favor of that [curriculum infusion]. I certainly wouldn't have any opposition to it. I think it's sort of tragic that with the undergraduate students the only way I can get a laugh out of them is with some reference to sex or alcohol. I have taken it upon myself to inject into my class situations talking about ethics, so I don't have any objection to talking about alcohol. In fact, I may do that now that you've mentioned it. (Tape 30, p. 3)

Another participant mentioned making direct referrals of students for treatment and maintained that faculty would be willing to help with the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives if approached:

I would like to think that over my long career, I have recommended treatment [for students] and I think that I've been instrumental in getting people [students] into treatment. These are people who got their butts in a real crack and I was able to...show them that...alcohol dependency is context bound and that they've got three out of the four contextual features....So, I think you can be, a faculty member can be, helpful in this way. I gotta tell ya, it was stunning to me that when I was getting ready to teach my alcohol class...there was no service course on this campus that gave people [students] information



[about alcohol]....And I was just amazed that they [the university] weren't using faculty. You know there are some faculty on this campus that students really relate to and why aren't they being enlisted in this? I just don't know.

(Tape 21, p. 7)

Yet, another participant expressed that most faculty do not believe this type of involvement with students is consistent with their faculty role and are concerned about possible repercussions from students if they intervene and provide inappropriate counsel:

I don't want to be cynical about its [increased faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives] probability of success; I'm trying to be realistic....I don't believe that faculty efforts would be successful because faculty just don't see themselves as counselors....They [faculty] would not talk about it [alcohol] in class, in an educative sense, unless it fit into some examples they're using in their subject area....If a student came in and was clearly miserable about something that had to do with alcohol, they [faculty] might help. Again, I don't know, but as I think about our faculty, I would say they would probably do either of two things. [First,] they would think this isn't my expertise; I can't help here. Second, they would think I don't want to try to help because this gets into a gray area, and if something happens to the student because I gave them bad advice, they might come back at me or something. (Tape 2, p. 7)

This same participant described a common concern held by faculty. Getting too involved in students' lives, which could result from their increased involvement in alcohol

education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, could compromise a faculty member's pedagogical relationship with the students:

Then there's the role of the faculty and the student in the sense of professional distance [in their] relationship. If I start getting involved in a student's life, the one thing that is dangerous to a faculty member and a student is for the relationship to go beyond a professional or pedagogical relationship. People often times think about the fact of never taking advantage of the student in some way....Often times that kind of relationship can work the other way; students take advantage of the faculty if they want. The nature of the discipline or the enterprise does not lend itself to interpersonal relationships. People talk about advising and being compassionate, etc. is a wonderful value. The question is, are there limits to that? (Tape 2, p. 8)

Another faculty participant echoed the perception that faculty would be reluctant to increase their involvement in campus alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives given their lack of interest:

It [increased faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives] probably would not be very high unless we had some incident where there were major problems or major issues that made people say, "Well, we need to get involved in this."....The faculty I deal with are not particularly interested in getting involved in somebody's life in that kind of manner. They [faculty] take the attitude that drinking is a decision that they [students] make or don't make. I'd be a little surprised to see them [faculty] do that [increase their involvement]. (Tape 14, p. 2)

This same participant speculated that the recent decision to allow on-campus tailgating with alcohol in conjunction with football games forfeited what little hope existed previously to mobilize faculty involvement in the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. Those responsible for the tailgating decision are to blame, according to this participant:

I think it's still an uphill battle to do that [mobilize faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives] for a couple of reasons. [First,] I don't think the faculty would want to get involved at that level. Second, because of the incident with the football stadium [the decision to allow tailgating with alcohol], the administration would not have great credibility with the faculty on that issue....The administration has probably lost some ground [with the faculty] on that issue in the last year or two here on campus. I think that hurt [any efforts to mobilize faculty]. (Tape 14, p. 2)

The subject of parental notification, as a strategy to reduce illegal use and abuse of alcohol among college students, was discussed with the faculty participants. The majority of participants were supportive of the university adopting such a policy. This participant approached the discussion of parental notification from the perspective of a parent of college students:

I wasn't aware of [parental notification], but I would certainly support that. As a parent...I would have appreciated knowing [about alcohol violations committed by the participant's children]. I think it could have had some impact with my own children. I don't find [parental notification] anything but

helpful in my opinion....This could very well be a life or death situation, and I would want to know as a parent. (Tape 30, pp. 2-3)

Another participant offered support to parental notification as long as there is sufficient evidence to substantiate that a student has indeed violated an alcohol law or policy or that a student is experiencing alcohol-related problems:

I remember my days at college when I would have vehemently opposed any form of parental notification....But I've also been the parent of two children who went to college. I guess with some maturity comes a change of attitude. I would not oppose parental notification when there is sufficient evidence that the student has indeed violated the alcohol laws. What that sufficient evidence would have to be, in my judgment, would be some form of conviction in the criminal courts. Either that or a history of frequent arrests for example, of using a false ID, or moving vehicle violations where there's alcohol involved. I just wouldn't want to have the administration of this university calling me up and saying, we think your daughter's drinking. I'd say, "Thank you, I know she's drinking." To be told that there's a risk to their academic status, as well as to their health when there's sufficient reason, I think it would not be a bad thing all together....I would not object to that.

(Tape 29, p. 6)

However, another participant questioned the value of parental notification policies, preferring strategies that emphasize students' own responsibility and that of their peers for changing student behavior over strategies that could cause a significant family disruption.

**Notifying parents of student alcohol violations in extreme or extenuating situations seemed appropriate to this participant:**

**My inclination would be to be suspicious of that as a helpful strategy. One of the things we know in terms of development is that there's a challenge for children to emancipate themselves from their parents and become more and more responsible for their own behavior. For underage students, they [parents] have some legal liability. At the same time, I think going to the parent suggests that the parents really couldn't do anything about it. Frankly, other than causing a big family ruckus, I'm not sure what it accomplishes. That doesn't mean the parents should never know any of this. I don't mean that....I would prefer to see a strategy that would try to emphasize the student's own responsibility or the group responsibility for that behavior that is more age specific than to try to bring in adults, in particularly parents, who are probably absent from the scene. (Tape 25, p. 3)**

**The faculty participants also offered their perspectives on environmental management initiatives designed to alter the physical, social, economic, and legal environmental conditions that contribute to college students' illegal use and abuse of alcohol. One of the participants questioned the practicality of environmental management initiatives, in general:**

**We [university officials] can't control the environment. Environmental management would work if we could control the environment. We can maybe chip away from a legal perspective, but there's so much [of the environment] that we have no control over. (Tape 26, p. 6)**

However, another participant found environmental management initiatives to be appealing and asserted that environmental management initiatives can engage the “institutions of the community” to change students’ behaviors related to alcohol:

I believe that when the so-called institutions of the community decide that they’re going to change student behavior, they probably can. You have the university in contact with the law enforcement officers of the community, with the economic leadership, the owners of the bars, with the moral leadership of churches, synagogues, and mosques, with the alumni leadership; I think you can probably do something to change behavior. You can alert people to the consequences of too much drinking – people die....However, I think there are other ways to do it, for example, by education, by persuasion, not just by law enforcement. Is it a good thing to do? Yes, because it’s a good thing to pay attention to the wellness of young people and old people.... Why don’t we promote wellness? In other words, if the use of alcohol were regarded as a public health issue, not a public illness issue...we may have a pretty profound effect without killing the opportunity and even the right for people who are over 21 to drink when they want to drink. The question is always a matter of balance. This environmental management approach appeals to me. (Tape 29, pp. 7-8)

Finally, the piece of environmental management that involves working with community officials including local bar owners, produced interesting discussion with the faculty participants. Some of the faculty believed that working with the local bar owners would be mutually beneficial to the process of changing students’ attitudes and behaviors

related to alcohol. Although important, this participant said that unfortunately the university and local bar owners do not appear to be working together:

If there's an issue, it's to the benefit of the university and the local bar owners to work together. For example, the university doesn't want them [underage students] to drink and the bar owners don't want to get caught serving them. Let's try to educate them [bar owners] to be responsible....They don't want to be in a position of being stupid and serving it [alcohol] to minors and getting in trouble. So there is some common ground. Unfortunately, I don't see a whole lot of it [working together] happening. (Tape 2, p. 12)

### **Student Constituency**

#### **Perceptions of Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruence**

As were the administrator and faculty participants, the student participants were asked to describe the university's philosophy on alcohol. Some participants' responses were descriptive while others were more emotional: "The university philosophy related to alcohol is the zero-to-five campaign" (Tape 1, p. 1); "They [university officials] say they want responsible drinking, but then they make some of their policies no alcohol at all" (Tape 18, p. 1); "I think they [the university] try to take a stance against alcohol" (Tape 15, p. 1); "We cannot have alcohol on campus" (Tape 32, p. 1); "I think [the university] sends a message that it's horrible to drink" (Tape 27, p. 9); and "[The university] needs to let students know that's how and that's where this university stands on the issue [of alcohol]" (Tape 8, p. 20).

Another participant described the university's philosophy on alcohol as the university being "against alcohol on campus." However, the decision to allow on-campus tailgating

with alcohol and other exceptions to the university's "dry campus" philosophy and policies have resulted in "mixed signals" to the students, according to this participant:

The measures they [the university] have taken in the past few years getting alcohol out of the union, and, until this year, not allowing students to drink during tailgating activities before football games leads you to believe that they're against alcohol on campus. This year, with tailgating [with alcohol] in the parking lot, I think they [the university] are sending mixed signals....I think you have a big student population that doesn't go to football games....It [tailgating with alcohol] sends a statement that the only reason they allow it [alcohol] is to get us [students] to go to football games....I think they [the university] are not consistent, specifically...[allowing alcohol at the] football stadium [parking lot] for one and alumni center for another. I think by the [basketball arena] there is some sort of area where people can drink. That's inconsistent with university policy that this is a dry campus. (Tape 15, p. 1)

In describing the university's philosophy on alcohol, another participant said, "I think the university philosophy is like they [the university] are trying to get students to cut back on drinking and trying to make students drink more in moderation, you know, how to drink maturely and responsibly" (Tape 7, p. 1). Another participant described the philosophy on alcohol in terms of moderate drinking and policy exceptions:

I think the philosophy [on alcohol] is one of moderation in a word. I think the campus is dry for good reason. I mean they [the university] obviously, they don't want alcohol anywhere on campus, except in the [president's] house and in the football suites – luxury suites – and on certain [football] game days.



But for the most part, the campus is dry and the policy is one of taking measures to reduce the amount of alcohol that's involved and students intake. In general, I guess the general policy is just based on the programs, the zero-to-five drink poster that everyone sees, the guidelines they set forth, and their policies towards residence halls and Greek life. Their [the university's] idea is to limit it and, in general, to slow down the consumption of alcohol [by students]. (Tape 8, p. 1)

This same student referred to the "hypocrisy" that other students have expressed about the philosophy on alcohol given the exceptions that are made by the university, but this student did not share that opinion:

They [other students] say there's hypocrisy involved in allowing, you know, alcohol in certain places for alumni, but personally I don't see that. I see those [exceptions] as probably a good, responsible decision to allow alcohol at certain events at the union or to allow alcohol in the football luxury boxes. I mean, I think that they [the university] are trying to help students make responsible, I mean, to encourage students to make responsible decisions and to curb underage drinking by students. (Tape 8, p. 2)

Another participant provided this interpretation of the university's philosophy on alcohol, hesitating briefly on whether or not the philosophy exists in written form:

From what I understand as far as what the philosophy [on alcohol] says, or if there is a philosophy written out anywhere, is that essentially it [the university] is a dry campus whereas, on campus, you're not allowed to provide or sell alcohol or even have alcohol on your person. This applies to

essentially everywhere on campus – in the residence halls, the union, the athletic buildings, what not. Exceptions are made in a few places like the skyboxes at the football stadium, the [alumni and donor] room in the building next to [the basketball arena], and there's also an exception where you can have alcohol in the union if you're having some type of celebration like a retirement or something. So that's where the philosophy [on alcohol] kind of is a little bit shady, but for the most part the campus is supposed to be dry....They [the university] are also kind of pushing off-campus residents, fraternities and sororities to go essentially dry. But that's the philosophy as far as I understand it. (Tape 4, p. 1)

Another participant stated that the university communicates its alcohol policy well but does not communicate its alcohol philosophy well. This participant also commented that there is “on the record” and “off the record” policy interpretations by the residence hall staff:

I think they [the university] do a good job of communicating the [alcohol] policy; I don't think they do a good job of communicating their philosophy [on alcohol]....A lot of students don't agree with the philosophy and that's why drinking goes on in the [residence] halls. That's maybe why a lot of RAs don't enforce the [alcohol] rules so well, because they don't understand the philosophy behind it. I don't understand what their [the university's] philosophy is based on...so I have to guess as to what their philosophy is. They [the university] haven't communicated [the philosophy on alcohol]. As far as the [alcohol] policies in the [residence life] handbook, [residence life]

officials on the record will say this is our policy. Off the record, they may say another. (Tape 27, p. 2)

The same participant offered additional “off the record” attitudes of the professional and student staff members in this participant’s residence hall. The staff members would let the alcohol policy “slide” in the interest of protecting the residents from drinking and driving, according to this participant:

The alcohol policies [in the residence halls] have less to do with enforcement and more with their [the residence hall staff members’] attitudes about it. Like my [professional staff member] for instance. [My staff member] isn’t necessarily anti-alcohol, so as a result [my staff member] would rather us [students] drink in the hall. If it’s a beer watching a game, I think [my staff member] would rather we do that than go out and drink and drive somewhere. That isn’t necessarily consistent with the [alcohol] policy, but [my staff member] would rather us [students] be safe than go out somewhere....In my experience, [my staff member] and my RA my freshman year both kind of had the same attitude about it [alcohol]. Not necessarily that they wanted it [drinking in the residence halls] to be condoned, but their responsibility...is ultimately to take care of you and your safety. If that means letting the [alcohol] policy slide in the interest of you being safe, then they’re willing to do that. (Tape 27, pp. 1-2)

Other participants referred to the university as being inconsistent in its application of the philosophy and policies on alcohol and as having inconsistencies among its various alcohol policies. One participant commented, “I think people [students and university

officials] see a lot of inconsistencies in the [alcohol] policies" (Tape 1, p. 3). Another participant shared similar sentiments and cited the university's interests in generating revenue as driving the decisions to amend the alcohol policy:

In my opinion, the university's policy [on alcohol] is not consistent. When it is helpful for the university to make money, such as at the [alumni association facility] or in the scholarship suites of the [football] stadium, they [the university] are willing to amend the "dry campus" rule. And if a student group is having a party with alcohol, it's okay as long as it [the party] is off campus. (Tape 5, p. 1)

According to another participant, the inconsistency is a "split thing" between students and non-students in terms of who "can get permission to have alcohol on campus:"

They [the university] have been very inconsistent when it comes to, if you are, you know, essentially a rich donor or you can afford to tailgate because tailgating is designed essentially for [alumni and donors]....If you are a faculty member who's retiring, or you know someone in administration, you can get permission to have alcohol on campus....I think the philosophy [on alcohol] is not very clear and the policy [on alcohol] is still very shady. It's still very much like you can do it [have alcohol on campus] if you have a lot of money or you're a staff member or what not. It's just kind of a split thing between students and everyone else. (Tape 4, p. 3)

Another participant discussed the discrepancy between the university's philosophy and policies on alcohol and the actions of some university officials, particularly one senior-

level university administrator. According to this same participant, this particular administrator's "actions speak louder than [this person's] words:"

I don't feel like their [the university's] actions always support that end [alcohol-related institutional congruence]. I've been at bars where university people [officials] have been drinking, which isn't a problem. But I've been at places when it's been out-of-hand, as far as drinking too much, not knowing when to quit....That's their choice, university people [officials] of legal age, to drink. Sometimes I've seen it get out of hand, and the actions of the university and the actions of the university's staff wouldn't coincide, but conflict....This one particular person [senior-level university administrator] has been late for work after going out the night before at a bar where students are drinking too much....I guess actions speak a lot louder than words.

(Tape 9, pp. 1-2)

Another participant commented on alcohol-related institutional incongruence and the controversy surrounding the decision to allow on-campus tailgating with alcohol raised by some students in the campus student newspaper:

One of the ways that the new athletic director wanted to increase attendance at the [football] games was to have tailgating [with alcohol]....So they had to institute a policy where it allows alcohol three hours before game time in a particular zone on campus. It [the decision to allow tailgating with alcohol] was kind of controversial because it was a dry campus. We [the university] hadn't allowed it before and then they decided to make that one exception....I think they [the students who responded in the student newspaper] were

wondering if it was really necessary to have tailgating. I think students wondered if this is really going to add to the attendance at football games or if it is just going to add to more drunken people on campus. (Tape 1, p. 2)

Yet, another participant implied rather cynically that the recent tailgating decision should not be such a “disruption” to the university community. In this participant’s opinion, on-campus tailgating with alcohol has always gone on; the only difference now is that it’s legal:

I personally enjoy it [tailgating with alcohol]. I think it’s okay. The university thinks it’s okay. They [the university] basically just allow the people who aren’t down there doing it illegally now to do it also. There’s always been people tailgating down there. But having the rule that you can’t tailgate, it just makes the people put the beer in a cup rather than drinking it out of a can. So I guess it’s hard for me to see that [on-campus tailgating with alcohol] as such a disruption because, since I’ve been on this campus, that’s something that’s been here. (Tape 9, p. 3)

The same participant offered these comments at the end of the interview, reflecting a much different position about alcohol on campus than at the beginning of the interview:

Honestly, I think the best bet would be if this was a dry campus....Get a good football team and sell tickets that way. That would be your best bet....If you have a rule, then follow it, and if you’re consistent, you won’t even have these issues arising. Not everyone is going to be happy, but this is the rule and it’s the same for everyone; it’s so much easier that way. If you could prohibit alcohol, I would probably....Whatever you do, it has to be the same for

everyone who can legally consume alcohol. So, if you want to have it [alcohol] in the union for events, then any event can have it and [those] who are at the event who are over 21 can have a drink. I don't think there's any other way to toe the line. (Tape 9, p. 12)

This participant substantiated an earlier participant's perspective on tailgating by stating that the decision to allow alcohol at tailgating put a "damper" on the tailgating practices that occurred prior to the decision; those practices involved alcohol:

At first I thought it [the decision to allow alcohol at tailgating] was good, but then I realized that it kind of put a damper on the tailgating from my perspective because I usually didn't even go into games. I would just stay outside and tailgate [with alcohol] and now we aren't allowed to do that anymore. At first everyone was really happy and then they realized that it really wasn't that great for the tailgating aspect. (Tape 28, p. 2)

Another participant concluded the interview by stating that, if the university was against alcohol completely, it would not have made the decision to allow on-campus tailgating with alcohol. But, the university should maintain a "dry campus" philosophy and policy most of the time. "Very much in favor" of tailgating with alcohol, this participant thought that tailgating should be "suspended" immediately, however, if a death or serious injury resulted from tailgating:

If the university wanted to send a real clear signal that they were against alcohol, they would have eliminated alcohol on every facet of the university. They [the university] would get rid of it [alcohol] across the board, all the exceptions and everything. But on the other hand, I think that the university

loses a lot by doing that. I'm very much in favor of being able to drink at the football games. You couldn't do that if they [the university] wanted to take a real clear stance against drinking. [But,] they can't go completely the other way and say we can just drink anywhere. They [the university] still need to have the policy that you can't drink, that it's a dry campus. The more that they can try to get that message across, the better. If there was some kind of alcohol-related incident or death or something that had to do with drinking at football games, I think immediately that program [tailgating with alcohol] should be suspended. In that case, it would be in the university's best interest to get rid of that program. (Tape 15, pp. 9-10)

#### **ARIC and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol**

When asked if alcohol-related institutional congruence has an effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, the majority of participants' direct responses indicated that there was little or no effect, but their indirect responses and other subtle references revealed that there was an effect. One participant responded that while "students are going to do what they want to do," the university's efforts do matter and so does alcohol-related institutional congruence, if for no other reason than to provide students with a "moral compass."

To an extent I think students are going to do what they want to do, but I qualify that by saying all these [university] efforts...it takes a lot of effort, but I think they take some kind of toll, or they do kind of chip away, or they do kind of give some general impression [of having an effect]. They [the university's efforts] remind students that with alcohol there's still some



dangers....I think if they weren't there, then all of a sudden...drinking would increase. So, maybe it does matter, but you know, maybe they're doing the best they can, and maybe it is making some difference....I wouldn't advocate taking it [the university's efforts] all away just because it's not eliminating the problem, or solving the problem, or maybe even getting close to solving the problem because it's still at least providing the moral compass...it's saying [the university's efforts related to alcohol education and prevention] is still a priority....[What] it always comes down to for me...I still act based on my own values and what I think is my own judgment. I think students take the same into account when they make their judgments and develop their values. The reason everyone acts so differently and the reason everybody takes such a different stance on all this is because different people react...differently.

(Tape 8, pp. 16-17)

Another participant also maintained that "students will do what they want to do" regardless of the university's policies on alcohol. There is an innate need among some students to resist policies that prohibit alcohol use on campus because students are "mad" at those policies, according to this participant:

I think students will do what they want to do regardless of the policy [on alcohol] because there is an inconsistency with reality and policy. It's going to keep happening. If people [students] want to drink, they're still going to do it....Because students are kind of forced by policy not to drink alcohol on campus, they sometimes are mad at those kinds of policies. They want to do it [drink] against the policy. (Tape 32, pp. 6-7)

Another participant contended that it is wrong for the university to issue an “edict” or to “legislate” that students of legal drinking age cannot consume alcohol on campus. This participant admitted to violating the university’s alcohol policy because it “detracts from my [the participant’s] education value.” Interestingly, this was the third participant to use these exact or similar words: “Students are going to do what they want to do:”

For some students, it [college] is when you learn your personal limits as far as alcohol or anything. Taking away that sort of learning environment or legislating some sort of strict edict against things that restrict your personal development [is wrong], which is what I’ve always thought was the goal of the university, in general. That’s why college graduates are so desired because of what they know about themselves and the world and what they’ve figured out in the college settings. I personally don’t follow the policy of strictly dry campus because I feel that detracts from my education value. I don’t condone and promote people going out and throwing house parties where they’re falling down and drunk, etc. I know my personal limits and I don’t exceed those. All people [students] might not be as responsible about it as I might be, but, because I’m responsible and because I feel there’s an educational value and an entertainment value associated with it [consuming alcohol], that’s why I have adopted the [personal alcohol] policy and the I actions I do....I think it’s odd and I think it’s funny because it just proves my point even further that the [university’s alcohol] policy doesn’t really work. Students are going to do what they want to do. (Tape 27, pp. 5-6)

Another student also commented that alcohol-related institutional congruence has little or no effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, stating that peer groups have a "bigger influence." This participant added that university officials who drink with students can validate students' drinking habits:

From my perspective, I don't really think so [that alcohol-related institutional congruence has an effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol]. I think your peer group is a much bigger influence than any kind of campaign or any action the university can put out. I think with this one particular individual [senior-level university administrator] in the bar, that can send a bad message if you're being influenced – like drinking is acceptable and we always go out and drink. If you would see faculty members in the bars, then that could be like everyone here does. That could just be kind of a verification, but I still don't think that [alcohol-related institutional congruence] is a major influence. (Tape 9, p. 4)

Earlier in the conversation, this same participant referred to the aforementioned senior-level university administrator who is known to drink with the students. This participant was "bothered" when this administrator was late for work because of drinking with students the night before and by the message that sends to students, as well as by the "double standard" that applies when a student misses a test for the same reason:

I think a lot of students think that [senior-level university administrator] is a very fun person to be around. But stepping back and looking at it, they [students] probably know that it shouldn't go on. It's a fun situation when it's happening, right? To be out in a bar and have a good time is not a big deal.

Coming in late to work and other things like that, I would guess that most people would feel that's inappropriate just because if we [students] go out and drink too much and miss a test, you're not excused for that. It's sort of a double standard....This one individual [the same senior-level university administrator] who I've seen at the bars obviously really bothers me. (Tape 9, p. 3)

Although mentioning briefly the issue of mixed messages, another participant disagreed with the previous participant, commenting that this senior-level university administrator socializing with students and drinking responsibly with them helps students feel more comfortable with this administrator:

[Senior-level university administrator] goes out with the students and stuff, but obviously [that person] doesn't get wasted, like you don't see [that person] throwing up at the bar and things like that. But I think you could say that [that person's actions] sends a mixed message....[That person's] obviously drinking in moderation, [that person's] not binge drinking, and [that person's] also socializing with the students and trying to talk to relate to them so they feel comfortable to come talk to [that person]. I almost like that approach...I mean, like because I feel so many times the faculty try and preach like, no drinking and all this stuff, but if you [the university] preach drinking in moderation, drinking responsibly, I think we [students] will respond more than if you say don't drink. (Tape 7, pp. 21-22)

Another participant approved of university officials and students of legal drinking age socializing together with alcohol, but recognized that there are certain bars where university

officials should not go. This participant mentioned drinking with the same senior-level university administrator in this person's home and in bars. This interaction has been meaningful for this participant and has helped this administrator be more "in-tune" with the students, according to this participant:

I think as long as the students are 21 I don't see anything wrong with it [university officials and students socializing together with alcohol]....If an administrator or anyone that works for the university is drinking with someone that's underage, that's not good at all....I don't think they [university officials] should hesitate to go to bars, but there are certain bars where it's known that a lot of underage drinking occurs. It would not be in their best interest to be there. For example, I don't think it would be very good for an administrator or professor to show-up at the [local student bar]....[Senior-level university administrator], we used to go drinking with [this administrator] all the time. We used to go to [that person's] house and drink. I kind of respect [that person] more for that; [that person's] making an effort to...relate to students and be in contact with students and be friends with students....I respect [that person] more for that, that [person] makes that effort to go out with students and to be more in-tune with students. (Tape 15, p. 7)

However, another participant asserted that alcohol-related institutional congruence (or incongruence) does affect students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. For students, one cause of "mixed messages" related to alcohol is that the university's alcohol policy does not extend off-campus to the activities of student organizations, specifically fraternities and sororities. According to this participant, the university's policy of "it's okay here/it's not

okay there” not only affects students’ attitudes related to alcohol, but also makes it more difficult for residence hall staff to enforce the university and department of residence life policies on alcohol:

There are very mixed messages [about alcohol]. When there are buses that drop off very drunk [Greek] students at the residence halls, it sends the message that Greek students who party off campus can drink and it’s okay. It’s harder to enforce [the university and department of residence life] alcohol policies because students’ attitudes are affected by the “it’s okay here/it’s not okay here” [university] policy on alcohol. (Tape 5, p. 2)

Another participant asserted that the tailgating policy has contributed to perceptions among the students of the university administration as elitist and capitalistic (i.e., money can buy you alcohol privileges on campus). This perception, along with all the exceptions that are made to the university’s alcohol policy, have resulted in anger among the students. More unfortunately, according to this participant, students’ attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol are not changing due to the university’s “hypocrisy” surrounding alcohol:

The message that I’ve seen, and even with the new tailgating policy, is that if you have enough money you can drink on campus....When you have a policy that is, you know, dependent on where you are at, what time of year it is, all these what ifs or exceptions....If you give \$1,000 you can drink; or, if you can go sit in this tiny little section, you can drink. So if it [the goal of the university] is to promote safety issues or get across non-drinking issues, then they [the university] are doing a very poor job of it in my opinion because of all of these exceptions all over campus....There is some anger about the

[alcohol] policy among students....I guess the thing I would say is that if the university is trying to change [students'] attitudes about drinking, I guess the biggest effects of this hypocrisy is that they really haven't. (Tape 4, pp. 6-7)

Another participant asserted that the university's mixed messages related to alcohol illuminate the university's inconsistent alcohol philosophy and its capitalistic orientation. The message to students, according to this participant, is that the university will compromise its moral principles in the interest of generating revenue. The effect of this is that some students are feeling "sold out" to greater university interests. On the other hand, some students are hoping that the university will rescind other policies related to alcohol on campus:

I wouldn't want to go on record by saying that it [tailgating with alcohol] sends mixed messages to people [students] because I think then the administration would say, based on our philosophy, we don't want to send a mixed message...then they would take away tailgating. I do think it [tailgating with alcohol] sends a mixed message that it's okay in the interest of revenue to have alcohol, but it's not okay in the interest of morals. There's an inconsistency of philosophy there. So sacrificing your morals is okay for money? I don't know what kind of message they're trying to send....I think a lot of students feel sold out in a lot of different areas and that's just one of them. Students have been drinking in their residence halls. Prohibition didn't work and neither does this policy of a dry campus. Students are torn between being encouraged and being pissed off. Pissed that they [the university] didn't

yield more and encouraged by the fact that they yielded at all. There are certainly a lot of opinions floating around out there. (Tape 27, p. 4)

Another participant described the effect of the decision to allow on-campus tailgating with alcohol as “upsetting” to students who are concerned about binge/heavy drinking, drunk driving, and the harmful effects that can result from both:

There were definitely [student newspaper] articles and columns [asking] why is this necessary. If we [the university] are trying to send out messages that drunk driving and drinking too much alcohol are bad, then why are we allowing an arena where students could possibly go down and get really drunk and then go to a public event? I think they [students] were upset about that. (Tape 1, p. 3)

In discussing the social normative marketing campaign in relations to students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, another participant compared that campaign to the *Old Navy* commercials – regardless of how students feel, the social normative marketing campaign may be having an effect. However, according to this participant, the “mixed messages” that have resulted from the tailgating decision are “negating” the effect of the social normative marketing campaign and are “destroying” students' opinions about the university's philosophy on alcohol:

I think the university is trying with the [social normative marketing] campaign to put forth a consistent effort every day....I've been to a couple of campaign meetings where they ask you [students] how you think it's going; I think it's working. I don't know if it's working exactly the way that they intended it to work, but people [students] know about it. The first thing I personally think



of when you ask me about the university's philosophy [on alcohol] is the zero-to-five campaign. Most students would probably say that first. It's kind of like those *Old Navy* commercials where they're not the most popular and people don't necessarily like them, but you keep thinking about maybe I should go to *Old Navy*. Well, maybe students don't necessarily like the zero-to-five drinks campaign or don't like the way they [the university] are going about the campaign, but you're still thinking about it and it's still a topic of conversation, which is their intention....I think [some] people see it as a positive, and some people see it as a negative, but I think it's working because they [students] are still talking about it and they still think of it, which I think is the whole goal. But when you make inconsistent policies like the tailgating thing, it kind of negates it [the effect of the campaign] because you're trying to go for a consistent message. When you [the university] make something that is inconsistent with that consistent message, I think you really destroy how students feel about your whole philosophy [on alcohol]. (Tape 1, p. 4)

Another participant described a situation in the residence halls that could have had a similar negative effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. A resident was displaying beer cans in a window, a direct violation of residence life policy, and nothing appeared to be happening in terms of corrective action. This discrepancy, according to this participant, between policy and its application, as well as its lack of enforcement, sends a message to students that it is acceptable to violate alcohol-related policies:

There's this guy who had a room right next to the entrance of [a specific residence hall], and, in the window, he'd have like maybe 20 beer cans. This

is also the guy who had a *Bud Light* sign in his window. Everyone [students] was like, "Gosh." They [students] are totally making a big deal out of it like, you know, "Oooh." We [the university] have this alcohol-free policy and there's a *Bud Light* sign in the window and beer cans there....What does that say to others students here? You know we have a policy, but you can break it if you want to. (Tape 4, pp. 17-18)

The issue of enforcement of the residence life alcohol policy in the residence halls surfaced with several of the student participants. One of the participants thought the problem was larger than lack of enforcement, referring to lack of education as the problem: "In the four years I have been a part of the cooperative living program...[no one] has ever done an alcohol [education] program" (Tape 1, p. 3). Another participant commented, "They [residence hall staff] don't put on [alcohol education] programs, but we have hall meetings. I don't think that [a residence hall professional staff member] last year ever touched on alcohol specifically. It's like an understood thing that everyone knows" (Tape 27, p. 3).

Still, the majority of student participants cited the lack of enforcement of the residence life alcohol policy as the main reason for all the alcohol-related problems in the residence halls. This participant characterized the residence halls as a "free-for-all" of alcohol:

I don't think they [alcohol policies] are enforced in the residence halls. Like I don't know if that has anything to do with it, I mean, consistency-wise, you know....It's an absolute, for all practical purposes, almost free-for-all of drinking and alcohol. It's just commonly known [among students]....I mean, the residence hall staff sees that alcohol is there, and they....I can't say that

they choose to turn their back on it; but, in some ways, I certainly don't think that they vigilantly enforce it, you know; and maybe they're doing their best. I just think, in general, that it's just kind of a quietly accepted fact. It's my impression that they [residence hall staff] just feel like it's something either they can't enforce or...they're just not willing to. It [the alcohol issue] is just not enough of a priority to make it their job to enforce [the alcohol policy].

(Tape 8, p. 3)

An admission from another participant substantiated the lack of enforcement of the residence life alcohol policy in the residence halls:

I know there should not be any alcohol-related containers in [the residence halls], but many [staff members] know that many residents actually have alcohol in their rooms. When I walk [through the residence hall] during the night shift...I see some alcohol containers. It's not that rare to see those kinds of realities against those policies....I understand that they [students] have parties and I know they have alcohol, but we [residence hall staff] don't knock on the doors as long as they keep quiet. They usually beg us not to report it because they are going to get in a lot of trouble....I have a right to knock on the door and report the incident, but most of time we just disregard it and just pass by. (Tape 32, p. 3)

Another participant also commented on the lack of enforcement of the alcohol policy in the residence halls, which is further complicated by resident assistants communicating to their residents: "Out-of-sight, out-of-mind." This participant indicated that such mixed messages promote student alcohol consumption in the residence halls:

My freshman year...we brought in alcohol to our room a couple of times, but we weren't the norm. I had a friend who lived in [a specific residence hall] and towards the end of the year, they snuck a keg into their room....I think it [alcohol in the residence halls] is very much that you're not supposed to have it, but everyone does....I don't know how they [residence hall professional staff] couldn't know it. As far as RAs...not all of them, but a lot of them, have the idea of out-of-sight, out-of-mind. Like, I don't see it, I don't know about it. They [RAs] are not necessarily afraid to tell their residents that, which promotes it even more by telling the residents that....If you just stick it under your bed, why not have alcohol in your room? (Tape 9, p. 9)

The same participant offered an example of effective peer enforcement of rules and regulations by sharing a response to a parking problem among residents of her living unit. This participant commented on the effects of consistent policy enforcement on students' attitudes and behaviors:

We have a real problem with parking....so last year [someone] set up a whole ticketing system and there were only four people who got ticketed; it was just incredible....After you get three \$75 tickets and your car is towed, you understand....It was clear-cut and people [students] knew what to do. Where you could and could not park was cut-and-dried....The year before, someone was in charge whose friends could park anywhere and you didn't know where you could and could not park; that was a mess. That's been my experience with everything....If you don't have clear rules, there's no point in having

rules at all because there's ways to get around them and people [students] will.

(Tape 9, p. 13)

In a conversation about alcohol-related institutional congruence in general, another participant referred to the first tailgate at which some of his friends received Minor in Possession (MIP) tickets. Because of the strict enforcement of the legal drinking age, this participant concluded that on-campus tailgating with alcohol was congruent with the university's philosophy and policies on alcohol and that the effect on students was pretty straightforward – they were ticketed for violating the law. However, this participant also implied that while enforcement of underage drinking at on-campus tailgating was strict, perhaps it was not that strict at other on-campus locations:

[We] went to [the stadium] to tailgate and five guys got MIPs the first weekend [of tailgating]....I mean they [campus police] pretty quickly showed us that underage drinking was not going to be acceptable even in that situation....So from my own experience, I'd say, by my definition, I'd say it's congruent because, you know, the enforcement of the [legal drinking] age. So, you know, they [the university] could say, okay, let's make it that way all the time so you [students] can't drink underage, but it's not [that way]. That [tailgating] was in a closed situation and it was easy to enforce and they did.

(Tape 8, p. 5)

Another participant also asserted that campus police enforcement of the alcohol regulations for tailgating has been strict and consistent. The participant implied that as a result, on-campus tailgating with alcohol was congruent with the university's philosophy and

policies on alcohol. The effect on students is that they know the campus police mean business:

I think they [the university] have done a good job with consistency with the campus police [enforcing the alcohol regulations for tailgating]. Like they [campus police] are down there [tailgating area] exactly when the beer is supposed to be put away and patrol that very well. They've handed out tickets to people. We were down there [drinking], and I didn't know the rules. A cop came up, so like we put things away, but he was like, you need to make sure about this next time: "Please put it [the alcohol] away right now because I have the right to give you a \$200 ticket."....The campus police have been very consistent with making sure that [tailgating] rules are followed. (Tape 7, p. 6)

The issue of local bars advertising in the campus student newspaper and posting flyers and chalking sidewalks on campus surfaced with the majority of student participants. In general, they did not view this issue as a problem nor did they view it as incongruent with the university's philosophy and policies on alcohol. This participant stated that students know these alcohol advertisements have nothing to do with the university and are not sanctioned by the university. As a result, according to this participant, these advertisements are inconsequential and have no effect on students' perceptions of the university's alcohol-related congruence:

[Local student bar] and different bars in town, definitely, definitely do that advertising stuff, but I don't see that as the university. I don't see any of the sidewalk chalking as university sanctioned or sponsored...or even necessarily a part of campus. I just see that as like....chalking is just people, just random

people trying to advertise for whatever. I mean, a web site or a meeting or whatever. That to me, doesn't even...I don't even think about it....As far as what I see in the [student newspaper], yeah, there's a lot of about alcohol.... Like in the last paper, there was a...guy doing a review on a strip club. People [students] know there are ads for alcohol and bars all over in the newspaper and stuff....Alcohol is definitely a part of students' lives. I mean, it's definitely a part of our everyday lives. I think that's just kind of a generally accepted fact by students and by everybody. So, I just think it's part of student life. So, I mean, it doesn't cause a disruption when I see an ad for alcohol or I see students talking about it...it definitely seems natural. (Tape 8, pp. 6-7)

Another participant commented on the alcohol advertising that occurs on campus in the form of sidewalk chalking. This participant suggested that these alcohol advertisements, while odd and out-of-place, given the university is "alcohol-free," have little effect on students; they just laugh about it:

[Local student bar], it's a bar and they've been advertising all over [the university] lately like chalking the sidewalks. We had a discussion about it in a [Mascot] Nights meeting, like what gives them free rein to chalk everywhere? I mean obviously there's free expression. But you know, alcohol [advertisements] on an alcohol-free campus? It just kind of just doesn't make sense. I know they're trying to advertise, but it's just funny because it [alcohol advertisements on an alcohol-free campus] is kind of a joke. (Tape 7, p. 8)

This same participant referred to students being “confused” about all of the mixed messages about alcohol and suggested that centralizing the services on campus related to alcohol may lessen some of the confusion among students:

Personally, I think freshmen get so confused, like in their decision-making process, because there are so many mixed messages [about alcohol] on this campus. You know what I mean? Like there’s not just that one main person or office where you can go and learn how this works, like this is why we do this, like this is the liability issue, etc....We [the university] have all these different little areas or different offices or different departments, but I don’t know. I just think...they’re all good and they all serve a purpose on this campus, but I think that...[duplication of alcohol-related services]...is kind of pointless. (Tape 7, pp. 23-24)

#### **Student Participation in ARPPD and Students’ Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol**

When asked about university officials’ efforts to involve students and encourage their participation in university-wide programs or initiatives, in general, one student participant responded, “I don’t think the university pushes people [students] to get involved. I think the students have to take the initiative and go to the university and want to get involved before someone [a university official] will come up and ask them” (Tape 28, p. 6). Another participant made similar remarks:

It [student participation] varies from time to time. I think since I’ve been here, they [university officials] have tried more [to get students involved]. But I think it’s also the fact that students have pushed more to be involved....



The university, in my opinion, doesn't have a vested interest in getting students involved. (Tape 4, p. 11)

The same participant offered the following example of the university not involving students in an alcohol policy decision: "We weren't involved in the [tailgating] decision. We weren't when it comes right down to it. The whole thing was brought up by [the athletic director] and was approved by [the president]" (Tape 4, p. 5).

Another participant agreed that the university does not solicit student feedback, in general, on alcohol-related issues, however, continued by stating that such an approach was contrary to the university's usual approach of involving students in policy decisions. Interestingly, this participant credited students' "feedback" for the decision to allow on-campus tailgating with alcohol:

[The university] solicits student feedback in a lot of different realms, but I've never heard of them soliciting feedback on alcohol. If they do, I would imagine it's through [student government] or something. I'd imagine that the frequency is relatively rare because the [university's alcohol] policy was long in effect before I got here and it's probably likely to remain so. I doubt that the university is real open to [student] feedback on it [the alcohol policy], although I think the feedback from students got great enough that they [the university] allowed tailgating finally, which is a step in the right direction. Up until that, I don't know that they [the university] were real open to forums [on alcohol]. (Tape 27, pp. 3-4)

Although student feedback is solicited in some ways, in other ways, according to this same participant, the university marginalizes students and does not listen to them. This

participant believed that student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development is critical; however, the participant also contended that any outreach from university officials at this point would be perceived as “the university is just going through the motions” because the university appears to be “entrenched” when it comes to alcohol-related issues:

I'd think they [students] would bring a lot of value to it [alcohol policy discussions] because ultimately the students run this university, whether it's through their money or their opinions. If you don't have students, you don't have a university. A lot of students feel marginalized, in general, that their opinions aren't heard, that they [university officials] don't care, that this [the university] is basically a business, a commercialized business that *Coke* and all those other places endorse. I think students just feel like they're not very listened to. What value would students add [to alcohol policy discussions]? A lot of value, but I doubt if you'd get anyone [students] to show a whole lot of interest because I think they [students] would think the university is just going through the motions. I read every day in the [student newspaper] about students and faculty met for such and such a reason. I read about it a week later and about 20 students showed up. The dean of students comes down to the union every Monday or something and talks with students and that was supposedly a big deal?....Do I think students would add value in talking about it [campus alcohol issues]? Absolutely, but I doubt it would do a whole lot of good. I think the university has kind of entrenched themselves in the position they're taking on the whole thing. (Tape 27, pp. 7-8)

Another participant shared the implications of student participation in policy and program development regardless of the subject matter. If students are not involved in the development of the policies, they are not going to support them, according to this participant:

I think student involvement in almost every aspect that involves the university and the students is a must. Student involvement is pretty key. I think if students know that students weren't involved in a decision, they are almost against it from the get-go, no matter what it was. (Tape 1, p. 7)

Another participant believed that the key to narrowing the gap between students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol and the university's policies related to alcohol is for university officials and students to engage in meaningful dialogue about the problem of alcohol:

Obviously, there is a gap between reality and policy [related to alcohol]. It happens all the time. But that doesn't mean that we [the university] have to make more policies [on alcohol] than on something else. To make a better environment we [students and university officials] have to have a conversation or meeting to talk about it [the alcohol issue] and try to find the better policy or other compromise to solve this problem. (Tape 32, p. 5)

Another participant credited students' involvement and input as key factors in the successful launch of the Mascot Nights program and in the risky decision to plan the programs in direct competition with the heaviest partying nights for students. This participant commented that as a result of the trickle-down effect of student participation, the Mascot Nights program has grown and more students are participating:

The premise behind [Mascot Nights] when I was first asked to be on the committee was that there was supposed to be some sort of social program that was done once a month for students who didn't want to go to a party or didn't drink alcohol; this was an alternative place for them to go and be at and have fun at. A lot of the decisions we made and times we chose to have them were based on times...which traditionally a lot of students go out to parties and drink and get drunk....It may not seem like a great time to have a social event because you won't get as many people [students], but that wasn't the point. The point was to have it [Mascot Nights] at a time so that people who didn't necessarily want to go out and drink could have something to do and wouldn't have to sit at home, so there was an alternative there. That was the main goal to have the program be for that specific reason....I think they're really catching on. I felt when we started it that if we just kept doing them that they would become more popular. Whether the actual numbers were what the student affairs office was looking for at the get-go, I just felt if we kept doing them, that they would become more popular. I see more and more people [students] at them...[and] a lot of my friends are still running that program.

(Tape 1, pp. 5-6)

Challenging the notion that student participation in Mascot Nights has a trickle-down effect on other students, another participant discussed the perception among some students, particularly sorority women, that their involvement in Mascot Nights has been forced. This participant said, "The sororities each sponsor a [Mascot] Nights program. It's something

they have to do. No one says they have to do it, but I think that's how they feel, that they have to do it" (Tape 9, p. 5).

One of the participants discussed a personal level of involvement and participation with the Mascot Nights program and the important personal and interpersonal realizations that resulted from that involvement:

Being involved in [Mascot] Nights has had an effect on me. I think I've come to a greater realization about how much students do drink and how much it does affect them academically, socially, etc. I went through high school without thinking about alcohol. I never drank in high school; I never hung out with people who did. I came to college and was around people that did a lot of the time. I wasn't thinking about how it affected them, but once I got into [Mascot] Nights...I started thinking in that manner. I started looking at how alcohol did affect my friends and saw that it wasn't good. (Tape 1, p. 10)

Another participant mentioned that the visibility of the Mascot Nights program among students is still a problem, however, less so among residence hall students. This participant also mentioned bringing friends along to Mascot Nights, friends who might otherwise have gone out drinking, thus influencing their behavior if only temporarily:

Lots of students don't know about it [Mascot Nights]. If you live in the residence halls you know a lot about it....So I've taken many of my friends, who would have probably gone out to get drunk, to [Mascot] Nights and we've hung out, you know. So, I mean, that's a program that does work very well. (Tape 4, p. 8)

Describing the effects of the Mascot Nights program and other alcohol education and abuse prevention programs on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, another participant said candidly, "I don't feel like [Mascot] Nights or the zero-to-five campaign will necessarily modify [students'] behaviors [related to alcohol]" (Tape 9, p. 6). Another participant acknowledged that students are "very aware" of the social normative marketing campaign, specifically the zero-to-five statistic, but concurred that the campaign may not be producing any alcohol-related behavioral changes in students:

I think students have been affected by the social norms campaign; if nothing else, they [students] are very aware of the zero-to-five statistic. I don't know that it [the social normative marketing campaign] changes their [students'] behaviors [related to alcohol], but I believe there is some awareness [among students] at least. (Tape 5, p. 4)

Referring to the effects of the social normative marketing campaign on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, this participant could not pinpoint the overall effect of the campaign on students, but did say that students know about it. According to this participant, a lot of students joke about the social normative marketing campaign while others question the validity of the zero-to-five data:

Everybody knows what you're talking about when you say zero-to-five, zero to-five drinks, I mean. It [the social normative marketing campaign] has gotten across; at least the students are aware of it. But I can't really speak to the overall effect on students. I can just say that for a lot of students it's a joke....I think the university's idea was to get across the message that, in general, there are a lot of students who aren't drinking, who are casual

drinkers, and who aren't binge drinking. So it should be perfectly acceptable...[and] you shouldn't feel alone if you're doing that. I think that's kind of the message they [the university] are trying to get across, and I personally I don't think they get it across with that number [zero-to-five].

(Tape 8, pp. 9-10)

Participation in peer alcohol education initiatives like BACCHUS and GAMMA was discussed with the student participants. Along with most of the participants, this participant asserted that students who volunteer to be peer educators are not representative of the student body and as a result, they are not effective:

The students who would typically volunteer to do that [peer education] wouldn't be representative of the entire student population. They'd be people [students] who want to be RAs someday. I doubt that they'd be peers and people aren't going to trust somebody from an outside source coming in and telling them that alcohol is bad or whatever. (Tape 27, p. 11)

This participant had not heard of BACCHUS until it was mentioned in the conversation and said that GAMMA, while a noble effort, is not effective in its primary goal of reaching underage students. This participant asserted that college students, especially upper-level students, have "outgrown" organizations like BACCHUS and GAMMA:

I hadn't heard of the BACCHUS organization....I didn't know we had it on campus. I'd say...college students have kind of outgrown that. I mean... they've kind of heard the messages and they're pretty familiar with the effects of alcohol...[and] they're ready to make a decision based on that. The only thing I can really see out of that program personally...would be more of a

place for students who don't drink to come together and...maybe meet students who feel similarly. Educating [other students] about the evils of drinking...[and] the effects of alcohol...I just don't see that being effective.... [In terms of GAMMA], again, it's a noble effort. I mean it's directed at freshmen, in general,...[and] I think that's a good thing because...it focuses on the underage, the general underage students....The idea that GAMMA is trying to get at is to prove that you can have fun without drinking.

Unfortunately, I don't think they're succeeding right now. (Tape 8, pp. 14-15)

Another participant had heard of BACCHUS, but was not familiar with the purpose and activities of this particular peer education network. This participant was knowledgeable about GAMMA and contended it was ineffective:

I've heard of it [BACCHUS], but I don't know what they do....The thing I would say about GAMMA is it's less effective than a program like [Mascot] Nights. What I remember happening with GAMMA when I was an undergrad and in [fraternity] is that students would go to GAMMA because their chapter needed to send people. But they'd go and skip out early and go to the bars.

So GAMMA, I've never thought of as being that effective. (Tape 15, p. 4)

Another participant offered these comments on peer education efforts like BACCHUS and GAMMA: "I'm not even sure that those [peer education] efforts are effective" (Tape 9, p. 7). This same participant continued by discussing the effectiveness of GAMMA's largest annual program, the GAMMA Lock-In: "People go [to the GAMMA Lock-In] and they have a good time when they're there, but it's not something that they would be like...; it's still like, people poke fun at it" (Tape 9, p. 7).



Another participant talked about fraternity and sorority involvement in alcohol-related programs, specifically alcohol-free social programming like Mascot Nights and the GAMMA Lock-In. Some of their involvement is disingenuous, mere attempts to build positive images on campus and with their inter/national organizations, according to this participant. Also, a general “too cool” attitude exists among Greek students, particularly freshmen, as it relates to alcohol-free social programming:

The Greek community sometimes is “too cool” for things like that [alcohol-free social programming] so you kind of have to keep pushing it. Like if you show them they’re going to benefit from it [alcohol-free social programming] by getting their non-alcohol programming requirements done and looking good for their national, then that will help. You know what I mean?....I would ask a couple of people [students] what they thought of it [a specific alcohol-free social program] and they said it wasn’t, you know, that bad. I think the juniors and seniors of each chapter are more mature so they realize that they can have fun without alcohol, whereas the freshmen are trying to find themselves and trying to be cool, so obviously, they don’t think it [alcohol-free social programming] is that cool. (Tape 7, p. 3)

This same participant discussed the value of students participating in educational programs on alcohol and the effect certain programs can have on their attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol:

I think good speakers who talk like, you know, about MADD or SADD...they have an effect [on students]. Like when they talk about their son or daughter

being killed in a drunk-driving accident, you know. Student will like go back home and think about that like, wow! (Tape 7, p. 20)

In concluding the interview, another participant provided an alarming commentary on how university officials have elected not to involve students adequately in alcohol-related policy and program development, in general, and offered a prediction on what will happen following the next alcohol-related tragedy directly affecting the university: "I guarantee that if some university students die because of drunk driving, then they [names of three university officials] will be talking about how we [the university] need to work with students to get alcohol policies or alcohol programs going" (Tape 4, p. 22). Another participant offered a similar commentary: "It may actually take some sort of tragedy for it [alcohol] to become important again [to university officials]" (Tape 1, p. 11).

### **Additional Participant Perceptions and Constructions**

To acquire a greater understanding and general assessment of students' overall awareness of the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, the student participants were asked about three university programs or initiatives, specifically Mascot Nights, the Alcohol Task Force, and the social normative marketing campaign. The students were most familiar with the social normative marketing campaign, referred to by many of them as the zero-to-five campaign; they were least familiar with the Alcohol Task Force.

Overall awareness of the Mascot Nights program varied the most among the student participants. Some of their responses included: "I'm not familiar with [Mascot] Nights" (Tape 28, p. 3); "No, I've not heard about that [Mascot Nights] program" (Tape 27, p. 3); "I have heard about that one program [Mascot Nights], but I don't know what exactly they are

doing” (Tape 32, p. 1); and “[Mascot] Nights I think is a very student-friendly program” (Tape 4, p. 3). One participant who was completely aware of the Mascot Nights program as a result of direct involvement with the planning committee implied that Mascot Nights may be reaching the wrong student audience (i.e., students who are not interested in drinking):

I believe that students who participate in [Mascot] Nights see it as a fun program that is not based around alcohol. For students who are not interested in drinking, I think it [Mascot Nights] gives them a positive way to participate in campus activities. However, these are also the people [students] who would probably not go out drinking anyway. (Tape 5, p. 3)

Regardless of who attends, this same participant contended that alcohol-free programming such as Mascots Nights “sends a positive message to the student body” (Tape 5, p. 2).

One participant commented that a “small portion” of students will go drinking after a Mascot Nights event, but for a “large portion” of students, Mascot Nights will be their social activity for the entire evening:

[Mascot] Nights is a good program. I’ve gone to a lot of [Mascot] Night events; I think they’re effective. I think there’s a small portion of students that go to [Mascot] Night events and go because they know people [other students] who are going, but then they just walk...to the [local student bars] afterwards. There’s going to be a small portion of people [students] that aren’t really going to stop drinking that night. At the same time, there’s a large portion of people [students] that will go to [Mascot Nights] and that will be the night’s entertainment and then will go home rather than going to the bar

that night. I think it [Mascot Nights] definitely has a positive impact on students that actually go. (Tape 15, p. 2)

Another participant described some students as being “very familiar” with the Mascot Nights program and cited another university department’s interest in coordinating the program:

Some [students] are very familiar with [Mascot] Nights. I think [Mascot] Nights is a very good program....I would love actually to take that out of the [student activities office] and bring it over to the [student union programming board office] because of the programming, you know. They [students] say we’re going to have fun, so on and so forth, and students come to [Mascot] Nights for a good time. (Tape 18, p. 2)

This same participant concluded the interview with another expression of interest in transferring the Mascot Nights program from the student activities office to the student union programming board office:

I think that [student union programming board] and [Mascot] Nights are a perfect combination....I think if we could make [Mascot] Nights touch more university places and if we could involve more people [students]...not only in the residence halls, but you know, the Greek system....I think that would be great. (Tape 18, p. 11)

In discussing the university’s Alcohol Task Force, the majority of student participants had little or no knowledge of the Task Force or its role or functions on campus: “I’ve never heard of the university’s Alcohol Task Force” (Tape 28, p. 5); “I’ve never heard about it [the Alcohol Task Force]” (Tape 32, p. 2); “I’m not completely familiar with the [Alcohol] Task

Force or what their role is” (Tape 15, p. 2); “I’ve heard the term [Alcohol Task Force], but I’ve never had any experience with them” (Tape 27, p. 3); and “Yeah, I’m aware of it [the Alcohol Task Force]....I thought they had something to do with [Mascot] Nights, but I don’t know what they do” (Tape 18, p. 4).

Another participant remarked on the Alcohol Task Force and was concerned about the lack of student involvement and participation in the Task Force:

The [Alcohol] Task Force I don’t know much about....I’m not sure actually what the Task Force actually does....From what I hear, the Alcohol Task Force has no representation from students on there....There’s been no request that’s come from the administration to the student government asking for representation. (Tape 4, pp. 3-4)

Another participant recalled that representatives from the Alcohol Task Force had not appeared before a student government meeting to solicit student support and involvement in the university’s alcohol education and abuse prevention efforts:

I don’t think anyone [representing the Alcohol Task Force] in the two or three years that I’ve been involved with [student government] came to ask [for student support and participation]....Maybe that’s because [student government] never invited anyone from the Alcohol Task Force to come and speak. (Tape 15, p. 6)

The social normative marketing campaign, or zero-to-five campaign, was the initiative with which the student participants were most familiar. Only one participant struggled to describe the campaign: “I know there is some kind of pamphlet going around...like a moderate drinking policy. Like how many drinks do you drink? Like three

or four, that's all I know" (Tape 32, p. 1). Another participant described the social normative marketing campaign as, "the university philosophy related to alcohol" (Tape 1, p. 1). Yet another participant described the campaign's message as, "Don't stop drinking necessarily, but if you're going to drink, drink responsibly" (Tape 4, p. 2).

Another participant supported the social normative marketing campaign and advocated that the campaign was particularly helpful to students who have no experience with alcohol:

I've seen it [the social normative marketing campaign] on buses and posters, ads in the [student newspaper]. I probably see them [social normative marketing campaign ads] once every week and a half or two weeks. It's a pretty decent campaign as far as I'm concerned. In my experience a lot of kids [students] that don't have any experience with alcohol at all will go out and get themselves "trashed" and this [drinking alcohol] is one of those things you have to do in moderation if you choose to [drink]. It probably will save somebody like the experience of waking up next to a toilet. (Tape 27, p. 3)

Another participant referred to the social normative marketing campaign as a "joke," but appeared to be familiar with similar campaigns on other campuses. The social normative marketing campaigns on those campuses have been more effective, according to this participant:

As far as the zero-to-five drinks [campaign], personally, I think it's kind of a joke...I don't think it has any effect [on students]. I've heard at other universities where it's been implemented, where they've put a lot more money into it, that it has statistically had a lot of effect. As far as my day-to-day

experience at [the university], aside from it just being a joke...people [students] kind of make fun of it. Like, you've only had three drinks; does that mean I can have eight?....I don't think it [the campaign] makes anybody feel that they're abnormal if they drink more than zero to five drinks. If that's what the point of the campaign was. (Tape 15, p. 2)

The social normative marketing campaign also was a "joke" to this participant who commented that the ongoing visibility of the campaign encourages students to drink more because of the constant campaign advertisements and because of the personal challenge to exceed the zero-to-five normative drinking data:

It [the social normative marketing campaign] is a joke; it's like a huge mockery on this campus. Like everyone [students] thinks it's funny if you're out [to ask another student], "Did you have your zero-to-five drinks?" Yeah, right. It's just been made into this big joke. I think...if they [students] sat back and reflected for a second...[they would say] I drink way more than that....But then they would just start laughing again....I think that it [the campaign] kind of makes them [students] think more about drinking....It makes you think that I can go straight to the bar, and I can prove that wrong or whatever. I think it makes kids [students] kind of drink more. (Tape 7, pp. 14-15)

Another participant admitted to making and participating in jokes about the social normative marketing campaign, but also realized that the campaign probably has had an effect on some students. Interestingly, this participant paused briefly and reflected that the

campaign “kind of suggests that everyone drinks,” implying that this message could be problematic:

Personally, I think it [the social normative marketing campaign] is kind of funny. I mean it’s one way for the university to try to combat it [the alcohol problem]. So maybe that’s one way of addressing it....It also implies that the majority of students are drinking, drinking zero to five drinks....I mean it [the campaign] kind of suggests that everyone drinks. But, its effect on some students might be kind of, it’s okay to only drink a little bit or it’s okay to not drink. For other students, it’s totally a joke; it’s so funny to them....They just use it as a conversation piece, as a joke....I think I’ve made the joke about having our zero-to-five drinks or something about that. I’m sure that I’ve definitely heard a lot of that. I’ve probably made my share of them [jokes].

(Tape 8, p. 8)

Another participant admitted to not liking the social normative marketing campaign, claiming general uncertainty about the campaign and its purpose:

I really don’t like that campaign. I don’t see its purpose....All I’ve seen are newspaper ads and a whole bunch of faces smiling, saying they drink zero-to-five drinks every time they go out. I don’t see what it adds, what it does, how it looks, or [how] it makes students more responsible [using alcohol]. (Tape

18, p. 3)

Later in the interview, this same participant questioned the visibility of the social normative campaign among freshmen and their basic understanding of it: “I bet your everyday freshman



who lives in the residence halls doesn't even know the zero-to-five alcohol campaign is part of the university's working at curbing alcohol [abuse among students]" (Tape 18, p. 12).

Another participant questioned the validity of the social normative marketing campaign's zero-to-five normative data, suggesting that students drink more than the campaign data indicate. This participant also offered, from personal experience, the observation that Greek students appear to drink more than non-Greek students do:

I'm not sure if it [social normative marketing campaign] really helps all that much. The people [students] I've been with, when I see that, are like that [the zero-to-five data] is not true. They [students] drink a lot more than that. It's more disbelief than it is people thinking, "Oh, my gosh, I'm only going to have five drinks next time." I have two groups of friends – my friends that didn't go Greek, and then I have my Greek friends. When I go out with them [Greek friends] I see that [Greek students] drink a lot more. (Tape 28, p. 4)

Another participant offered a concern that resulted from observing and listening to peers. This concern relates directly to the theoretical framework of the social normative marketing campaign and other research on college student drinking – college students overestimate other students' alcohol consumption levels, especially those from greater social distances (e.g., other living units on campus):

I think a lot of people [students] in the [on-campus student cooperative living units] would like to think, or do think, that there's more drinking in all the other living organizations; I would disagree. I haven't been really directly involved in the Greek programs. I do know a few people in the residence halls and seeing the keggers they have there...but, we've also had keggers

in the [on-campus student cooperative living units]. I think the students themselves feel like they don't drink as much, but I think there's a lot of students in the [on-campus student cooperative living units] that do. Potentially, it could be worse than in some other living organizations because the attitude is that it's not that big of a problem in the [on-campus student cooperative living units] so we don't necessarily do anything about it. (Tape 1, p. 10)

Increased faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives also was discussed with the student participants. One of them thought it was a great idea in theory, but faculty "would not be willing to go for that" (Tape 18, p. 8). Another participant questioned the likelihood of increased faculty involvement and the appropriateness of curriculum infusion of alcohol abuse prevention material. This same participant provided an example of how faculty marginalize the problem of alcohol abuse among college students and suggested that it would be better if faculty not mention alcohol at all rather than marginalize it:

I just really don't know if it's possible or even appropriate to try to incorporate alcohol into the curriculum at all. However, there's definitely room to improve, I would think. I've been in classes where the big "lecture" is to go get your partying in this weekend, but be ready to come back. It seems like they [faculty] are saying go get drunk this weekend because next week we're going to really do it hard-core here in chemistry. They could just not mention it [alcohol] at all. (Tape 1, p. 9)

Another participant described a similar experience with a graduate teaching assistant who used examples in class marginalizing the problem of alcohol abuse and who invited students to go drinking. This participant also remarked that curriculum infusion of alcohol abuse prevention material would be inappropriate because that kind of “thing” is inappropriate for the classroom:

My TA for [a specific academic course]...was using a cash flow example of a petty cash fund. We [the class] were talking about what’s good cash control. The example [the TA gave] was you and four of your friends put money into a pot to buy alcohol....The whole thing...[was about] buying alcohol. She [the TA] invited a lot of us class members to the [local student bar] to go drink with her. She [the TA] talked occasionally about how drunk she had gotten the night before. I didn’t really appreciate all this. Not that it makes me uncomfortable, but I can see how it could make other people [students] uncomfortable. I’ve had some professors mention it [alcohol]. In my opinion, that kind of talk is inappropriate. Not because it makes me feel uncomfortable or because I have an aversion to alcohol...I don’t think that belongs in the classroom. (Tape 27, pp. 6-7)

Another participant shared this example of a faculty member marginalizing the problem of alcohol abuse of among college students and as a result, how the faculty member then was perceived as “funny” by the participant:

I remember once in [a specific academic course] my teacher on Friday morning, and he [the faculty member] would just laugh at us [students] because he said that he could totally smell the bar. He told us to shower

before we came to class. He kind of joked about that. I thought it was funny because it was truthful. He wasn't being seriously upset about it. (Tape 28, p. 3)

Later in the interview, this same participant shared a slightly different opinion, one that expressed how faculty could aid in the university's efforts to curb student alcohol abuse: "I think if faculty were more concerned [about student alcohol issues] it would help things. I don't think it would make any difference in these big classes....If it's a small class and if the teacher pulled me aside, yeah...that would make a difference" (Tape 28, p. 5).

Another participant described a situation where the problem of alcohol abuse was reversed; the faculty member appeared to have the problem: "I knew one of my professors was an alcoholic because of his alcohol smell in class and sometimes he [the professor] had to skip a class because he couldn't give the lecture" (Tape 32, p. 6).

In discussing parental notification as a strategy to reduce alcohol abuse among college students, this participant offered the following thought: "I think it [parental notification] would have a negative effect. I know it's not tattling in reality. If parents are notified about their student's [alcohol violations]?...I think the student is an adult and it [parental notification] won't help the situation, I don't think" (Tape 18, p. 9).

Another participant appeared to support parental notification as long as parents are notified only of "legitimate" issues, not students just "joking around:"

My folks would jump down my throat if they got that [notification of an alcohol violation]....If the university has a legitimate concern, then they have every right to tell the parents. If it's something like an eating disorder or something, and there was an obvious concern, then they should tell the

parents. They shouldn't if it's just people [students] joking around. I think there definitely needs to be a legitimate concern before the parent gets called.

(Tape 28, p. 5)

When this participant was asked to elaborate on "joking around," much of what was shared involved situations with alcohol that would be in direct violation of the university and department of residence life alcohol policies.

Finally, another participant added that the greater problems of illegal use and abuse of alcohol among college students involve the city and its jurisdiction over the local bars and Greek organizations, specifically fraternity houses. University officials should work together with city officials to address these problems, according to this participant:

I don't think that a lot of the drinking occurs on campus; I don't think that's really the issue. I think it's more off campus, like with the Greeks or at the bars. There's not a lot they [the university] can do about that, except try to get the city to pay more attention to the problems. There is so much underage drinking here it's incredible. I know that people know that it is going on, like the bars know the IDs are fake or whatever. It just keeps happening. I would just try to get the city more involved. (Tape 28, p. 7)

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented the results of this study in three sections organized around the three research participant constituencies involved in this study: administrator, faculty, and student. The three overarching research questions and a fourth general category provided the structure for the presentation of the results.

**Chapter Five will begin with a brief overview of this study, followed by the analysis of the results, the presentation of the conclusions, and the implications for further research.**

## **CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS**

Preceded by a brief overview of the study, this chapter presents the analysis of the results and the conclusions from this study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the research implications from this study for further research on the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

### **Overview of Study**

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. A secondary purpose was to examine the relationship between student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. With these purposes in mind, three overarching research questions were developed:

1. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding alcohol-related congruence – the co-congruence among the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and among administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and application of the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol?
2. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding the effect of alcohol-related institutional congruence on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol?

3. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding the effect of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol?

This study was conducted within the naturalistic research paradigm with the overall research approach based on constructivist qualitative research methods (Krathwohl, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). An instrumental case study prototype (Berg, 1998) was selected as the research design to provide a better understanding of the research focus with the actual case, the research site, serving as a backdrop. The research site was a large, state-assisted Midwestern Doctoral/Research University – Extensive institution (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2000 Ed.). Status sampling and snowball sampling techniques (Dobbert, 1982; Krathwohl, 1998) were utilized to identify 33 research participants (12 administrators, 9 faculty members, and 12 students) for personal interviews. A semi-structured interview format (Fontana & Frey, 1994) was selected for the participant interviews, and a participant-construct instrument (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) was used for the interview questions.

Personal interviews conducted in December 2001 and March 2002 provided the primary data for this study; document analysis provided secondary data. Approximately 500 pages of double-spaced, word-processed transcripts were generated from the interviews. The data were fractured, coded, and analyzed using methods prescribed by Yin (1994), Krathwohl (1998), and Miles and Huberman (1984). Saturation of categories, emergence of regularities, and overextension criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were used to determine that data collection and analysis had reached a point of logical conclusion. Credibility,



transferability, dependability, and confirmability features (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were incorporated to enhance the trustworthiness of this study.

### **Analysis**

The analysis of the results of this study is presented in this section, organized into four subsections. Three of the subsections relate to the three overarching research questions that guided this study:

1. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding alcohol-related congruence – the co-congruence among the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and among administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and application of the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol? This subsection is titled: Perceptions of Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruence.
2. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding the effect of alcohol-related institutional congruence on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol? This subsection is titled: ARIC (Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruence) and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol.
3. What are the perceptions and constructions of the research participants regarding the effect of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol? This subsection is titled: Student Participation in ARPPD (Alcohol-Related Policy and Program Development) and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol.

The fourth subsection relates to additional participant perceptions and constructions that are relevant to this study. This subsection is titled: Additional Participant Perceptions and Constructions.

The data were analyzed using within-constituency and cross-constituency analyses. Within-constituency analysis was performed by analyzing the data collected from the participants within the same constituency (e.g., analyzing the data collected from one administrator in relation to the data collected from another administrator). Cross-constituency analysis was performed by analyzing the data collected from the participants across the three constituencies (e.g., analyzing the data collected from the administrator constituency in relation to the data collected from the faculty and student constituencies).

#### **Perceptions of Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruence**

The analysis of the participants' perceptions and constructions of alcohol-related institutional congruence revealed almost total unanimity among the participants across the three constituencies that the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol were incongruent. The participants used words and phrases such as *mixed messages, mixed signals, double standards, inconsistent, incongruent, exceptions, hypocritical, dissonance, and discord* in their discussions of the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol.

Put simply, confusion and dissonance exist among the majority of participants regarding the university's philosophy on alcohol. The majority of administrator participants asserted that there was no official written university philosophy on alcohol, and, as a result, there was no clear, consistent university-wide philosophy on alcohol. Furthermore, these administrators said it was highly unlikely that there would be an effort put forth by the

university to provide clarity or consistency to the philosophy on alcohol. The majority of administrators stated that the philosophy on alcohol varied by university division, department, and constituency. Some of these administrators attributed this variance to the departmentalized nature of the university. Some also asserted that the university's financial interests such as generating additional revenue for intercollegiate athletics, specifically the football program, have resulted in certain decisions (e.g., the decision to allow alcohol at on-campus tailgating) that contribute to the varied, and often times, conflicting perceptions and opinions of the university's philosophy on alcohol.

The majority of administrator participants did not or could not offer a description or interpretation of the university's philosophy on alcohol for the aforementioned reasons. The few administrators who did, described the philosophy as being consistent with the 21-year-old legal drinking age and as encouraging responsible, healthy choices for students of legal age who choose to consume alcohol. Some of the administrators argued that the university, through its social normative marketing campaign, had confounded its once consistent position on the 21-year-old legal drinking age. Their fear was that the campaign sends a mixed, incongruent message that underage consumption is inevitable and, as a result, it is acceptable for underage students to consume alcohol. Some of the administrators also asserted that inconsistent enforcement of alcohol policies by the campus police and other university officials was blurring the university's philosophy on alcohol and marginalizing its policies on alcohol.

The perceptions and constructions of the majority of faculty participants regarding alcohol-related institutional congruence were virtually identical to those of the administrator participants. The faculty participants, more than the administrator participants, provided

varied, conflicting descriptions and interpretations of the university's philosophy on alcohol. Some of the faculty participants described the philosophy on alcohol as promoting responsible alcohol use and opposing excess alcohol consumption by students, while others described the philosophy as supporting a "dry" campus and advocating "zero tolerance" for alcohol use on campus. While these differences in perceptions existed, the majority of faculty participants concurred that the university sends mixed, incongruent messages to students about alcohol. The causes of these mixed messages, according to these faculty participants, were more of an issue of inconsistent practices (e.g., the misapplication and inconsistent enforcement of the university alcohol policy and the exceptions made to that policy) and less of an issue of a blatant disconnect among the university's philosophy, policies, and programs related to alcohol.

The majority of student participants' perceptions and constructions of alcohol-related institutional congruence were quite similar to those of the administrator and faculty participants. The majority of students had difficulty describing or interpreting the university's philosophy on alcohol. The responses from the student participants who were able to describe or interpret the philosophy varied significantly. Some of the students described the philosophy on alcohol as promoting responsible alcohol use, while others interpreted the philosophy as total "anti-alcohol" use. Similar to the administrator and faculty participants, the majority of student participants could not recall having seen or read an official written statement on the university's philosophy on alcohol.

The majority of student participants, much like the administrator and faculty participants, cited numerous exceptions that are made to the university alcohol policy and perceived that the exceptions are made for financial reasons. All of the students were

familiar with alcohol being allowed in the scholarship suites of the football stadium, in the alumni and donor room adjacent to the basketball arena, and in the student union, among other places. It was the prevailing perception among the student participants that non-students (alumni, donors, administrators, and faculty) are the beneficiaries of the exceptions to the university alcohol policy, and students are not.

Lack of or inconsistent enforcement of the department of residence life alcohol policy by both student and professional housing staff was a common perception among all of the student participants. The students residing on campus in university housing, as well as the students residing off campus, asserted that a common perception among university students, in general, is that resident assistants and professional staff members in university housing are aware of and turn their backs on alcohol violations. Some of the student participants cited specific examples of resident assistants and/or professional staff members communicating to their residents on their floor or in their building “on the record” and “off the record” attitudes regarding what will be allowed related to alcohol. Some of the students provided examples of disciplinary sanctions for alcohol violations issued by department of residence life professional staff members that were not completed in their entirety or fulfilled at all by the students who were sanctioned. The following excerpt depicts the majority of student participants’ perceptions of enforcement of the department of residence life alcohol policy. This excerpt also reflects some of the students’ perceptions that the university is “anti-alcohol:”

The alcohol policies [in the residence halls] have less to do with enforcement and more with their [the residence hall staff members’] attitudes about it.

Like my [professional staff member] for instance. [My staff member] isn’t

necessarily anti-alcohol, so as a result [my staff member] would rather us [students] drink in the hall. If it's a beer watching a game, I think [my staff member] would rather we do that than go out and drink and drive somewhere. That isn't necessarily consistent with the [alcohol] policy, but [my staff member] would rather us [students] be safe than go out somewhere....In my experience, [my staff member] and my RA my freshman year both kind of had the same attitude about it [alcohol]. Not necessarily that they wanted it [drinking in the residence halls] to be condoned, but their responsibility...is ultimately to take care of you and your safety. If that means letting the [alcohol] policy slide in the interest of you being safe, then they're willing to do that. (Tape 27, pp. 1-2)

As it relates to alcohol-related institutional congruence, the issue of university officials drinking with students was one of which the student participants had differing opinions. Several of the student participants discussed one senior-level administrator who is widely known, in student circles, to go out drinking with students. Some of the students asserted that this administrator's attitudes and behaviors related to drinking with students are inappropriate, and therefore, negatively affect students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol and alcohol-related institutional congruence. Other students maintained that this administrator's attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol provide students with an example of responsible alcohol use and that socializing together with students with alcohol helps this administrator become more in-tune with students, therefore positively affecting students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol and alcohol-related institutional congruence.

An interesting difference was noted among the participants across the three constituencies related to the decision to allow alcohol at on-campus tailgating. The decision to allow alcohol at tailgating was cited by the majority of administrator and faculty participants as the leading cause of alcohol-related institutional incongruence. The majority of student participants, to the contrary, viewed the tailgating decision as an attempt by the university to increase alcohol-related institutional congruence. According to the majority of student participants, the decision to allow alcohol at on-campus tailgating actually has placed greater restrictions on what was once unauthorized, but quite common, alcohol consumption at tailgating that had gone on for years. From these students' perspectives, the university had turned its back on the widely known practice of alcohol consumption at tailgating in the past. Now, the students perceive that the university is "cracking down" on tailgating. Thus, the majority of student participants perceive that the decision to allow alcohol at on-campus tailgating is congruent with other university efforts to reduce and control alcohol consumption on campus. This statement from an underage student reflects the opinions of the majority of student participants about the tailgating decision:

At first I thought it [the decision to allow alcohol at tailgating] was good, but then I realized that it kind of put a damper on the tailgating from my perspective because I usually didn't even go into games. I would just stay outside and tailgate [with alcohol] and now we aren't allowed to do that anymore. At first everyone was really happy and then they realized that it really wasn't that great for the tailgating aspect. (Tape 28, p. 2)

**ARIC and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol**

The analysis of the participants' perceptions and constructions across the three constituencies regarding alcohol-related institutional congruence and its effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol revealed striking similarities between the administrator and faculty participants and equally striking differences between them and the student participants. Specifically, the majority of administrator and faculty participants asserted that alcohol-related institutional congruence has a positive effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol; the majority of students asserted that alcohol-related institutional congruence has little or no effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

The majority of administrator participants contended that mixed, incongruent institutional messages about alcohol have resulted from allowing alcohol in the scholarship suites at the football stadium, in the alumni and donor room adjacent to the basketball arena, at on-campus tailgating, and at other on-campus facilities and events. These mixed messages have caused confusion and dissonance among students about what is and is not acceptable regarding alcohol use on campus. Some of the administrator participants feared that the social normative marketing campaign also has caused confusion and dissonance among students by inferring that underage alcohol consumption is normative and perhaps acceptable by university standards. According to the majority of administrator participants, this confusion and dissonance contributes to alcohol-related institutional incongruence and does not serve the university well in its efforts to reduce students' illegal use and abuse of alcohol.

Some of the administrator participants were quite concerned that the university has not set forth, through an official written philosophy on alcohol, clear and consistent



expectations for students about their use of alcohol. As a result, there are no alcohol-related expectations for students to meet. The effect of not having alcohol-related expectations for students is described below by one administrator participant:

If you tell them [students] what to expect, they usually will meet your expectations. Here at [the university], we tell them that we expect deep thought or we expect diversity of thought and they meet our expectations.... You don't tell them what to expect on alcohol and they will meet those expectations too. (Tape 11, p. 7)

Some of the administrator participants asserted that university officials drinking with students, regardless of the location and quantity of alcohol consumed, sends mixed messages to students about alcohol, which contributes to alcohol-related institutional incongruence and negatively affects students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Similarly, when alcohol is involved, for example, as part of a year-end celebration for an academic department, but alcohol is not involved as part of the year-end celebration for student leaders sponsored by the division of student affairs, and the same student attends both events, what message is sent to that student? Is it that academic department officials are student-friendly and student affairs officials are not? Is it that academic department officials are acting inappropriately and student affairs officials are acting appropriately? According to the majority of administrator participants, the answers to these questions vary depending on the student. What does not vary, however, is that the same student is receiving two different messages from the same institution related to the role of alcohol in academic celebrations. The majority of administrator participants described these types of situations as common as

well as unfortunate because they contribute to alcohol-related institutional incongruence and negatively affect students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

The majority of faculty participants concurred with the administrator participants that there is a positive relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Interestingly, virtually all of their comments were framed in the context of incongruence versus congruence. The majority of faculty participants agreed that alcohol-related institutional incongruence has the effect of not discouraging students' illegal use and abuse of alcohol. The majority of faculty members also agreed that the university's mixed, incongruent messages about alcohol have given students an "easy out" and the opportunity to interpret and act on these messages to best fit their needs at a given point in time (i.e., the university has made it possible for students to become "opportunists" related to alcohol use).

The few faculty participants who were familiar with the social normative marketing campaign believed that it was contributing to alcohol-related institutional incongruence by sending a message that alcohol consumption, even underage consumption, is normative and acceptable. The majority of faculty participants who commented on university officials drinking with students asserted such behavior sends mixed messages to students about alcohol, and therefore, negatively affects students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. One faculty participant offered a dissenting opinion that university officials and students socializing together with alcohol was acceptable and that such socialization did not affect students negatively as long as the alcohol consumption was moderate. However, university officials becoming intoxicated with students would be inappropriate and would negatively

affect students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, according to the same faculty member.

Some of the faculty participants shared the common perspective of the majority of student participants that "students will do what they want to do" when it comes to alcohol. This was evidenced by three faculty participants who offered dissenting opinions on the effect of alcohol-related institutional congruence on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. One of these participants commented that students observe a hierarchy of influences, and what the university does or does not do related to alcohol is not among students' higher-level influences. Students observe their peer and family influences more in relation to their attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Similarly, another participant maintained that alcohol-related institutional congruence has little or no effect on students because students model their attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol after those of their close friends and other peers, not after university messages or initiatives.

The majority of student participants' direct responses initially in their interviews indicated that alcohol-related institutional congruence has little or no effect on their own attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. However, some of the students' indirect responses later in their interviews, particularly in the numerous examples they provided of alcohol-related institutional incongruence, indicated to this researcher that alcohol-related institutional congruence indeed does have an effect on their attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Interestingly, the few student participants who responded directly that alcohol-related institutional congruence might have a limited positive effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol referred to this limited effect as evident for *other* students.

The majority of student participants asserted that “students will do what they want to do” when it comes to alcohol and that alcohol-related institutional congruence and the university’s alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives have little or no effect on students’ attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Yet, some of these same students provided examples during their interviews in which alcohol-related institutional incongruence did appear to have an effect on both their attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol and those of other students. Some of these examples included: 1) a certain senior-level administrator who is widely known, in student circles, to go out drinking with students and become intoxicated with them; 2) the decision to allow alcohol at on-campus tailgating; 3) the lack of or inconsistent enforcement of the department of residence life alcohol policy; 4) some faculty members whose classroom examples, comments, and jokes marginalize the problem of student alcohol abuse; and 5) the lack of centralized and integrated university programs and services related to alcohol. Again, it should be noted that these examples came from only those student participants who contradicted their earlier assertions on the effect of alcohol-related congruence on students’ attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

In terms of the effect of alcohol-related institutional congruence on other students, the social normative marketing campaign, albeit a “joke” among the majority of student participants and their close friends and peer groups, was cited as an example of one initiative that might be having a limited effect on *other* students. Some of the student participants maintained that the campaign might be helpful particularly to those students who have little or no experience with alcohol. Other students asserted that the effect of the social normative marketing campaign on some students might be one of actually encouraging students to drink more because of the intense marketing and the ongoing visibility of the campaign.

The majority of student participants concurred with some of the faculty participants that the influence of students' close friends and peer groups has a far greater impact on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, much more of an influence than anything the university does or does not do. The following excerpt reflects the direct assertions of the majority of student participants' on the impact of peer influence, versus the impact of alcohol-related institutional congruence, on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol:

From my perspective, I don't really think so [that alcohol-related institutional congruence has an effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol]. I think your peer group is a much bigger influence than any kind of campaign or any action the university can put out. (Tape 9, p. 4)

The issues identified by some of the administrator and faculty participants as causes of alcohol-related institutional incongruence that negatively affect students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol were viewed differently by the majority of student participants. Among these issues were: 1) local bars advertising in the campus student newspaper and posting flyers and chalking sidewalks on campus; 2) university officials drinking with students; and 3) the decision to allow alcohol at on-campus tailgating. Although two of these issues (2 & 3) were cited by some of the students as having an effect on students, it should be noted again that the majority of student participants believed that these issues had little or no effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

The majority of student participants agreed that the lack of or inconsistent enforcement of the department of residence life alcohol policy is a significant cause of alcohol-related institutional incongruence and one that negatively affects students' attitudes

and behaviors related to alcohol. The student participants residing in university housing, as well as the student participants residing off campus, asserted that a common perception among university students is that some resident assistants and professional staff members turn their backs on alcohol violations in the residence halls and the on-campus cooperative living units. The majority of student participants indicated that the mixed, incongruent messages that result from “out of sight, out of mind” attitudes and practices of residence life employees actually promote alcohol consumption among students living in the residence halls and the on-campus cooperative living units. A department of residence life student employee validated this common student perception of the lack of or inconsistent alcohol policy enforcement in the residence halls and the on-campus cooperative living units:

I know there should not be any alcohol-related containers in [the residence halls], but many [staff members] know that many residents actually have alcohol in their rooms. When I walk [through the residence hall] during the night shift...I see some alcohol containers. It's not that rare to see those kinds of realities against those policies....I understand that they [students] have parties and I know they have alcohol, but we [residence hall staff] don't knock on the doors as long as they keep quiet. They usually beg us not to report it because they are going to get in a lot of trouble....I have a right to knock on the door and report the incident, but most of time we just disregard it and just pass by. (Tape 32, p. 3)

#### **Student Participation in ARPPD and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol**

The analysis of the participants' perceptions and constructions across the three constituencies revealed that the majority of administrator and faculty participants concurred

that student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development has a positive effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. As with the majority of student participants' direct assertions about the effect of alcohol-related institutional congruence, the majority of their direct assertions about the effect of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development contradicted the numerous examples they provided of such participation positively affecting or the lack of such participation negatively affecting students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

The majority of administrator participants not only agreed that there is a positive relationship between student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, they also asserted that students should be actively recruited to join university officials in leading the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention efforts. The majority of administrators asserted that until students are seated at the appropriate "tables" for making alcohol-related decisions and are seated with the same level of responsibility as university officials, the students who have been participating intermittently, not to mention other students, will not view themselves as equal stakeholders in addressing the problem of student alcohol abuse. Until this happens, neither student participation or ownership in the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives will occur nor will the critically important trickle-down effect of students positively affecting other students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

The majority of administrator participants also advocated that university officials should increase both their intensity and sincerity of outreach efforts directed at increasing student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development. Several of the

administrator participants mentioned that the university, in general, does not engage students in alcohol policy discussions and decisions as it does with other policies and issues that affect students (e.g., tuition and fee rates, diversity initiatives). To this end, the majority of administrators emphasized that the Alcohol Task Force must secure greater student representation through official student appointments from student government and other major student organizations.

Although a few of the administrator participants believed that some student leaders are the worst offenders of the university alcohol policy, the majority of administrator participants asserted that university officials must direct their initial outreach efforts at high-profile, well-liked student leaders from the major student organizations. It should be noted that the administrator participants with the longest tenure at this university were more skeptical of outreach efforts directed at student leaders, specifically student government leaders, given their repeated, failed attempts at increasing student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development in the past.

The majority of faculty participants agreed that students must be involved significantly in the development and implementation of alcohol-related policies and programs, and through their involvement, students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol will be affected positively. Some of the faculty participants asserted that there is a positive correlation between the level of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and the effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol (i.e., the greater the level of participation, the greater the effect on students). Two faculty participants mentioned that the university should be careful not to make the same mistake of most policy-making groups – failing to involve adequately the primary receivers, in this case, students, in



the development and implementation of the policies. One of these faculty members stated that university officials, when addressing matters that affect students, should always adopt an old adage from this faculty member's academic discipline – "Nothing about me without me" or in this case, nothing about alcohol without students.

Two of the faculty participants offered dissenting opinions on the effect of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. One of these participants suggested that students fail to make meaningful contributions or to have meaningful experiences when they are involved in university-wide or departmental initiatives, regardless of the nature of the initiatives. The other participant asserted that if student participation in alcohol-related policy or program development has any effect at all on students, the effect is limited to those students who are involved directly, and the effect does not last.

The majority of participants across the three constituencies questioned the effectiveness of student peer education programs and initiatives given that the students who are involved traditionally in these types of efforts as the "educators" are not representative of university students, in general. The majority of administrator and student participants were equally skeptical of the effectiveness of the university's BACCHUS and GAMMA chapters. According to them, student participation in BACCHUS and its programs and activities is non-existent because BACCHUS is non-existent for all practical purposes. Student participation in GAMMA and its programs and activities, although at times significant in terms of numbers, appears to be forced and disingenuous. All of the faculty participants had too little knowledge to comment specifically on the university's peer education networks (i.e., BACCHUS and GAMMA). However, the majority of them were able to discuss what

typically is too much social distance and difference between the peer educators and the students they are attempting to educate.

Excluding their assertions about the ineffectiveness of peer education programs and initiatives, the majority of student participants' direct assertions differed from those of the administrator and faculty participants regarding the effect of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. However, some of the students' indirect responses during their interviews, particularly in the numerous examples they provided, indicated to this researcher that 1) student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development has a positive effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, and 2) lack student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development has a negative effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

The majority of student participants did agree with the majority of administrators that university officials, in general, do not engage students in alcohol-related policy discussions and decisions to the same degree they engage them about other policies and issues of interest to students. The following comment reflects the students' perspectives on the implications of not involving students in policy discussions and decisions:

I think student involvement in almost every aspect that involves the university and the students is a must. Student involvement is pretty key. I think if students know that students weren't involved in a decision, they are almost against it from the get-go, no matter what it was. (Tape 1, p. 7)

Of the university's three major alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives – Mascot Nights, the Alcohol Task Force, and the social normative marketing

campaign – the majority of student participants agreed that student participation in Mascot Nights was having and will continue to have the greatest positive impact on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Increased student involvement on the Mascot Nights planning committee, as well as increased student participation in Mascot Night events will lead to greater student awareness of this program, in general. The majority of student participants asserted that this trickle-down effect will have a positive effect on other students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Only one student participant mentioned directly that student participation in the Mascot Nights program was not having a positive effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. This is the same participant who asserted that some students, particularly sorority women, feel coerced to participate in Mascot Night events.

The majority of student participants questioned the extent of student participation, both initially and currently, in the social normative marketing campaign. Some of these students implied that campaign officials should have solicited greater student participation and feedback in the campaign's formative stages, as well as greater ongoing feedback from students on the campaign's overall effectiveness. If this had happened, according to these students, the campaign data would reflect more accurately the actual normative alcohol consumption of students, and, as a result, the campaign would be having a greater positive effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. The majority opinion of the student participants and their perceptions of other students' opinions were that the social normative marketing campaign is a "joke." If the campaign is having any effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, most of the student participants believed it is

having the opposite effect from that which was intended (i.e., the campaign is encouraging students to drink more, not less).

Those few student participants who were aware of the Alcohol Task Force blamed the lack of student participation in the Task Force on the university officials who elected not to formally solicit student involvement. These students asserted that a significant reason why the Alcohol Task Force has not been successful in impacting students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol is that students are not involved in the Task Force to the extent they should be. One of these students offered the following prediction on how the university officials with ultimate responsibility for the Alcohol Task Force will respond if there is an alcohol-related student tragedy:

I guarantee that if some university students die because of drunk driving, then they [names of three university officials] will be talking about how we [the university] need to work with students to get alcohol policies or alcohol programs going. (Tape 4, p. 22)

Several of the student participants asserted that the issue of students' illegal use and abuse of alcohol does not appear to be an institutional priority. This comment from one participant reflects these students' assertions: "It may actually take some sort of tragedy for it [alcohol] to become important again [to university officials]" (Tape 1, p. 11).

### **Additional Participant Perceptions and Constructions**

The majority of participants, particularly the faculty and student participants, admitted to knowing little or nothing about the Alcohol Task Force. The one faculty member who had some understanding of the Task Force was a current member. The two students who had limited knowledge of the Alcohol Task Force contended that student participation

was lacking and official student representation, in the form of official appointments from student government, was needed.

Among the administrator participants, only those who were current members of the Alcohol Task Force had more than a superficial knowledge of the Task Force; even they had difficulty articulating its mission, functions, or goals. Two of the administrator participants had stopped attending Alcohol Task Force meetings because of their mounting frustrations with the Task Force and its chairperson. The administrator participants who were still attending meetings of the Task Force questioned its effectiveness, questioned its leadership, questioned whether the “right” university officials are serving on it, and questioned the level of student and city official representation on it. The majority of administrator participants asserted that the Alcohol Task Force must be given greater institutional priority, and until that happens, the Task Force will not have appropriate membership or institutional funding. These same administrators implied that the overall ineffectiveness of the Alcohol Task Force was a key factor in the lack of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and the lack alcohol-related institutional congruence.

In terms of the Mascot Nights program, again the majority of faculty participants were completely unaware of the program. Those who thought they were familiar with the Mascot Nights program mistook it for another university program (i.e., the fall new student orientation program). According to the coordinator of the Mascot Nights program (one of the administrator participants in this study), attempts to communicate with faculty about the Mascot Nights program via e-mail notices of upcoming programs had been rejected by some faculty who requested that they be taken off the e-mail listserve and not notified of such programs.

The majority of administrator and student participants were knowledgeable and supportive of the Mascot Nights program. Some of these administrators and students expressed the need to expand the Mascot Nights program to city venues and to increase its funding from the university so it could be a more competitive alternative to the local bars. An interesting difference existed between the administrator and student participants regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness of the Mascot Nights program. The majority of administrator participants contended that the program was not as effective as it should be because it was not receiving the commitment from students in terms of participation, and it was not reaching the “right” students (i.e., students who are heavy, frequent drinkers). In contrast, the majority of student participants believed that the Mascot Nights program was effective because it was having a “trickle down” effect in terms of increased student participation and it was reaching the “right” students (i.e., students who are infrequent drinkers and those who do not drink at all). Based on these contradictory perceptions, the mission of and intended student audiences for the Mascot Nights program either have not been communicated well or have been lost over time.

Regarding the social normative marketing campaign, again the majority of faculty participants had little or no awareness or understanding of the campaign. The faculty participant who was the most familiar with the campaign commented that, although it “has not really worked that well” and regardless of its cost effectiveness, the university had an obligation to the welfare of its students to continue the campaign. Two other faculty members commented that the campaign was an appropriate reminder to all members of the university community, particularly students, that alcohol should be consumed in moderation. However, these faculty participants were concerned that the overarching message of the

social normative marketing campaign inferred that underage drinking was inevitable and acceptable, which conflicts with other university messages on student alcohol consumption.

The administrator participants had divergent perspectives and opinions of the social normative marketing campaign. Some of the administrators asserted that the campaign was inconsistent with the university's philosophy on alcohol and that it acknowledged underage drinking as inevitable and acceptable. Others asserted that the campaign was consistent with the university's philosophy on alcohol and that it promoted responsible alcohol consumption. The majority of administrator participants maintained that the social normative marketing campaign was not integrated well with other university alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. These participants asserted that this lack of integration was contributing to the lack of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and to alcohol-related institutional incongruence. Interestingly, the majority of administrator and student participants believed strongly that the social normative marketing campaign's zero-to-five data on normative student alcohol consumption were not accurate (too low) nor statistically valid.

Of the university's three major alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, the student participants were most familiar with the social normative marketing campaign. However, the majority of student participants, as well as their close friends and peer groups, considered the campaign a "joke." Nearly all of the student participants mentioned that the zero-to-five data were too low, and as a result, the campaign was having little or no effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Of those students who speculated that the campaign might be having a limited positive effect on some students, they asserted that *other* students (not themselves) and students with little or no experience

with alcohol were the ones who were being affected by the campaign. A few of the student participants commented that given the incredible visibility of the social normative marketing campaign and the common perception among students that the campaign is a joke, the campaign might be having an unintended, escalating effect on students' alcohol consumption. The majority of student participants also questioned the level of student participation in the formative and evaluative stages of the campaign beyond their "smiling faces" in the campaign's advertisements.

The participants across the three constituencies had varied perspectives and opinions of the appropriateness and the effectiveness of increased faculty involvement in the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives as a strategy to reduce student alcohol abuse. This difference of opinion was most pronounced among the faculty participants. Some of the faculty were emphatic that faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives is central to the role of faculty, while others were equally emphatic that this type of involvement with students is inconsistent with the role of faculty and could place faculty in compromising positions, morally or legally, with the students. Some of the faculty participants agreed that more impersonal, less intrusive faculty involvement in the forms of announcements and referrals might be reasonable and appropriate if faculty members were made aware of the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and services. Regardless of these divergent opinions, one faculty member captured the sentiments of the majority of faculty participants by asserting that any effort from central administration to increase faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives would be ill-fated, almost laughable, given the administration's



decision to allow alcohol at tailgating along with other unspecified exceptions to the university alcohol policy.

The majority of student participants had difficulty envisioning increased faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives given the practices of some faculty who marginalize, intentionally or otherwise, the problem of student alcohol abuse. Several of the student participants referred to faculty members' comments and classroom examples that trivialized alcohol issues as they relate to students. When the students were asked to look beyond these problematic experiences with faculty, those who were able to do so then questioned the appropriateness of increased involvement by faculty and were even more skeptical of specific involvement such as curriculum infusion and faculty referrals of students who display troubling alcohol-related behaviors. It is this researcher's opinion that the culture of some faculty members' classrooms, more than the actual concept of increased faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives, caused the students' skepticism and their perceptions of this type of involvement by faculty as questionable, if not inappropriate.

The majority of administrator participants were supportive of increased faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, in theory, but like the students, the administrators were skeptical of it, in practice. Some of the administrators recounted stories that had been shared with them by students describing how faculty members marginalize and trivialize the issue of student alcohol abuse. Others discussed how previous outreach efforts to engage faculty in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives had been unsuccessful. The majority of administrator participants asserted that some faculty members contribute, intentionally or otherwise, to

alcohol-related institutional incongruence by giving in to, or at least by not challenging, the student alcohol culture. Examples included faculty members making inappropriate alcohol-related comments and jokes, using inappropriate alcohol-related classroom examples, and not scheduling exams on Fridays. In summary, the majority of administrator participants agreed that increased faculty involvement would be a useful strategy to reduce student alcohol abuse, but they were skeptical of the likelihood of getting faculty more involved.

On the topic of parental notification as a strategy to curb students' illegal use of and abuse of alcohol, some participants across the three constituencies questioned the effectiveness of such communication, with faculty indicating the greatest support for parental notification and students indicating the least support. A few of the faculty participants offered dissenting opinions on the effectiveness of parental notification, asserting that such communication with parents could cause major disruptions in the students' families and erode the relationship between the university and its students. However, the majority of faculty believed that parental notification of student alcohol violations was appropriate as long as notification was made only with appropriate and sufficient evidence for extreme and compelling reasons. An interesting note here is that the faculty who indicated the greatest support for parental notification began their discussions on the subject with comments like, "As a parent..." or "But I've also been the parent of two children who went to college....," framing their comments more from a parent perspective than a from faculty perspective.

Similar to the majority opinion of the faculty participants, the majority opinion of the student participants on parental notification was that such communication with students' parents was antithetical to the relationship between the university and its students and was contrary to other university perspectives on students as responsible, mature adults. A few of

the student participants did agree, however, that parental notification would be appropriate in “extreme” situations, but not in situations in which students were simply “joking around.” It is this researcher’s opinion that the situations described by these students as “extreme” are situations in which the university already notifies parents, with or without an official parental notification policy. It is also this researcher’s opinion that the situations described as students “joking around” are direct violations of the university or department of residence life alcohol policy.

Opinions about the appropriateness and effectiveness of parental notification as a strategy to curb students’ illegal use of and abuse of alcohol were strongest and most divergent among the administrator participants. Some of the administrator participants noted the senior student affairs officer’s strong objection to a formal parental notification policy, sharing the majority of faculty and student participants’ opinions that such a policy was threatening to students, damaging to the university/student relationship, and most importantly, inconsistent with the university’s position on *in loco parentis*. However, other administrator participants asserted that parental notification, if made only in response to second or third offenses or to extreme health and safety situations, was not contrary to the university’s position on *in loco parentis* and was part of the university’s obligation to its students and their parents to protect the well-being of students. The following quote from an administrator captures the likelihood of the university adopting a parental notification policy and expresses the opinions of both the administrators who support such a policy and those who do not:

I don’t see parental notification happening easily at [the university]. I don’t see that as a priority. [The university] views the student as a responsible,

maybe not always responsible, but at least a legally independent adult in their decision-making process. I think [the university] goes out of its way to protect that....The primary responsibility [of the university] is to the student, and we have a parent that is a consumer of our services as well. (Tape 24, p. 9)

Environmental management initiatives, specifically those designed to foster greater communication and collaboration with city officials, local bar owners, and liquor purveyors were supported by the majority of participants across the three constituencies. Because some of the more serious problems related to student alcohol abuse lie within the city's jurisdiction over the local bars and Greek organizations, some of the student participants contended that university officials should work more closely with city officials and local bar owners to address those problems. Some of the faculty participants also believed that university officials should establish better working relationships with local bar owners, acknowledging that such efforts are controversial, yet necessary steps in the process of changing students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. The majority of faculty participants, upon learning more about environmental management through the interviews, speculated that environmental management initiatives that engage the community might be effective strategies to positively affect students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

Although the majority of student participants believed that alcohol advertisements in the campus student newspaper did not affect their attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, some of the administrator participants asserted that these advertisements did, whether or not students realized it. These administrators also asserted that the university could increase its alcohol-related institutional congruence if the student newspaper staff would reduce (if not

eliminate) the number of alcohol advertisements in their newspaper. Moreover, to many of these administrators it seemed unreasonable for the university to expect the student newspaper to absorb the entire revenue loss from such a decision, further suggesting that the university subsidize should some of the loss. The following statement is representative of these administrators' assertions on the mixed messages to students that result from alcohol advertisements in the student newspaper and their assertions on what the university should do about it:

I have problems with the [student newspaper] accepting advertising for bars....We [the university] understand that there is a revenue issue for advertising with the [student newspaper]. However, if the university is trying to curtail [alcohol] consumption,...it seems to me that it's inappropriate for the student newspaper to, every Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday, run ads about specials at different bars off campus....During an Alcohol Task Force [meeting]...that particular topic came up about advertising on campus and in the [student newspaper]....Nobody wanted to commit the funding that would be necessary to say not only are we not going to run these types of ads anymore, but we're [also] going to commit funds so you [the student newspaper] don't take the total hit. We will subsidize you in order to put out a more positive message. Instead, we've got the social norms ad here next to a dollar pitcher ad for someplace. Talk about a mixed message. (Tape 23, p. 6)

In the analysis of the participants' perceptions and constructions within each of the three constituencies, the following general observations were made:

1. Within the student constituency, there were no notable differences between the perceptions and constructions of students who were leaders and the perceptions and constructions of students who were not leaders.
2. Within the faculty constituency, there were no notable differences between the perceptions and constructions of faculty who were tenured and the perceptions and constructions of faculty who were not tenured nor were there notable differences between faculty with longer institutional histories and faculty with shorter institutional histories.
3. Within the administrator constituency, the senior-level administrators, who also were the administrators with longer institutional histories, had more skeptical, fatalistic attitudes regarding the effectiveness of various institutional initiatives to affect students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. There were no other notable differences among the senior-, mid-, or entry-level administrators nor were there other notable differences between administrators with longer institutional histories and administrators with shorter institutional histories.

In summary, the analysis of the results indicates, in general, that alcohol-related institutional congruence does have a positive effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, whether or not students realize it. In addition, student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development does have a positive effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, whether or not students realize it. These two general findings are supported by eight major themes that emerged from the analysis of the results. They are as follows:

- 1. The absence of an official written university philosophy on alcohol through which the university communicates its alcohol-related expectations has resulted in confusion and dissonance among members of the university community, particularly students. The absence of an official philosophy on alcohol appears to have a negative effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**
- 2. The exceptions to the university alcohol policy that conflict with the notion of a "dry" campus (i.e., allowing alcohol at certain university-sponsored events and at certain university locations) have resulted in confusion and dissonance among members of the university community, particularly students. These exceptions appear to have a negative effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**
- 3. The lack of or inconsistent enforcement of the department of residence life alcohol policy appears to have a negative effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**
- 4. The decentralization of the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives causes confusion and dissonance among members of the university community, particularly students. This decentralization of alcohol-related programs and initiatives appears to have a negative effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**
- 5. There is neither a formal relationship nor regular communication between university officials and city leaders and no collaboration with local bar owners**

and liquor purveyors to address the problem of students' illegal use and abuse of alcohol. This lack of formal relationship, communication, and collaboration between the university and city appears to have a negative effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

6. Both the level of student involvement in alcohol-related policy and program development and the extent of student participation in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives are lacking. This lack of student involvement and participation appears to have a negative effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.
7. The Alcohol Task Force is not an institutional priority, as evidenced by its lack of leadership and direction, appropriate university and community membership, decision- and policy-making authority, and institutional positioning and funding. The lack of institutional priority given to the Alcohol Task Force appears to have a negative effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.
8. The social normative marketing campaign has resulted in confusion and dissonance among members of the university community, particularly students. The campaign appears to have a negative effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.



### **Conclusions**

In general, the results of this study revealed that 1) alcohol-related institutional congruence has a positive effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, and 2) student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development has a positive effect on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. From these two general findings and the eight major themes that emerged from the analysis of the results, eight conclusions were developed. The conclusions from this study are as follows:

**Conclusion One: Alcohol-related institutional congruence can be enhanced by an official written university philosophy on alcohol that communicates alcohol-related expectations to members of the university community, particularly students. An official written philosophy on alcohol could lead to positive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**

This study revealed that a clear, congruent university philosophy on alcohol gives direction to student learning and personal development related to alcohol (i.e., students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol) and that an unclear, incongruent philosophy on alcohol negatively affects students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Thus, the university philosophy on alcohol is a powerful factor in focusing students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

An official written university philosophy on alcohol is an effective means for the university to communicate its alcohol-related expectations to members of the university community, particularly students. An overwhelming majority of participants in this study indicated that the absence of an official written university philosophy on alcohol was the

leading cause of confusion and dissonance related to alcohol among members of the university community, particularly students. The effect of not having such a philosophy to communicate alcohol-related expectations to students was summarized best by one of the administrator participants in this study:

If you tell them [students] what to expect, they usually will meet your expectations. Here at [the university], we tell them that we expect deep thought or we expect diversity of thought and they meet our expectations.... You don't tell them what to expect on alcohol and they will meet those expectations too. (Tape 11, p. 7)

Research supports the need for a clear, congruent university philosophy on alcohol. The university philosophy on alcohol should be linked directly to the mission of the institution and should denounce students' illegal use and abuse of alcohol (Gianini & Nicholson, 1994). Higher education officials have a responsibility to communicate the official university philosophy on alcohol and the university's alcohol-related expectations to members of the university community, particularly students. According to DeJong (1999), students should be made aware that the institution:

will continue to enforce a "zero tolerance" policy for alcohol-related violence, vandalism, and other serious misconduct. Violent and destructive behavior will not be excused for any reason, especially that of being under the influence of alcohol. (p. 2)

An official university philosophy on alcohol is an opportunity to communicate the university's alcohol-related expectations on a number of issues, most importantly those expectations that commonly are not addressed in the university alcohol policy. Despite a

general movement towards banning on-campus alcohol promotions and advertisements (Wechsler, Kelly, et al., 2000), if university policy does not prohibit such promotions and advertisements, the official university philosophy on alcohol should strongly discourage them. Similarly, if the university does not have jurisdiction over the campus student newspaper, the university philosophy on alcohol should strongly discourage alcohol promotions and advertisements in the student newspaper and all other student publications.

An official university philosophy on alcohol is an opportunity to dissuade university officials and students from socializing together with alcohol. Whereas an official university policy prohibiting such socialization could be considered unreasonable, the official philosophy on alcohol should reflect that university officials and students socializing together with alcohol compromises the professional relationship between university officials and students, particularly the pedagogical relationship between faculty and students. An official university philosophy on alcohol also should discourage the use of alcohol at university-sponsored events in which students are involved.

The official university philosophy on alcohol should be communicated in appropriate university documents or materials that are distributed to new faculty and administrators, as well as through the content of orientation programs for new faculty and administrators. This philosophy should be iterated periodically to all faculty and administrators through ongoing professional development programs that are topically appropriate (e.g., those sponsored by the human resources department, center for teaching excellence, the academic affairs or student affairs division, or individual university departments).

More importantly, the official university philosophy on alcohol should be communicated in appropriate university documents or materials that are distributed to new

students (e.g., admissions materials and new student orientation materials) and returning students (e.g., the university student handbook, the university catalogue, the residence life student handbook). The official university philosophy on alcohol should also be communicated verbally to students in appropriate university programs and settings.

Through an official university philosophy on alcohol, the university should communicate its expectations regarding faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. Despite the perceptions of some participants in this and other studies that faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives is peripheral to their role, faculty are critical to the success of such initiatives (HEC, 1999):

Faculty have a substantial impact on the campus culture, particularly since they often remain at a college longer than administrators and students. By taking a leadership role in the faculty senate or a campus task force, evaluating ongoing prevention initiatives, or addressing AOD [alcohol and other drug] issues in the classroom, faculty can play an essential role in AOD prevention on their campuses and in the local communities. (p. 1)

An official written university philosophy on alcohol that communicates alcohol-related expectations to members of the university community, particularly students, can have a positive effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

**Conclusion Two: Alcohol-related institutional congruence can be enhanced by reducing the number of, if not eliminating, exceptions to the university alcohol policy that conflict with the philosophy on alcohol. Reducing the number of, if not eliminating, these exceptions to the university alcohol policy could lead to positive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**

According to the majority of participants in this study, exceptions to the university alcohol policy that conflict with the notion of a “dry” campus were another leading cause of confusion and dissonance related to alcohol among members of the university community, particularly students. Of special interest in this study, the exception to the university alcohol policy of allowing alcohol at on-campus tailgating had an extremely negative effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, according to nearly all of the administrator and faculty participants as well as a few of the student participants.

These exceptions to the university alcohol policy were cited by the majority of participants as major contributing factors to the mixed messages students receive about alcohol. Research indicates that higher education institutions can have a greater positive effect on alcohol abuse among college students by working to ensure that all elements of the college community avoid sending students mixed, incongruent messages about alcohol (HEC, 1997). Higher education institutions need to eliminate the mixed messages about alcohol that exist in the college environment in order to reduce alcohol abuse among college students (Pierce, 2000). Exceptions to the university's alcohol policy that conflict with its philosophy on alcohol are definitely among these mixed messages about alcohol.

According to the majority of faculty participants in this study, reducing the number of or eliminating exceptions to the university alcohol policy would restore some of the credibility that has been lost by those university officials making these exceptions (i.e., central administration). These same faculty participants also asserted that reducing the number of or eliminating these exceptions would increase the likelihood of greater faculty involvement as a whole in the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives.

Reducing the number of, if not eliminating, exceptions to the university alcohol policy that conflict with its philosophy on alcohol can have a positive effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

**Conclusion Three: Alcohol-related institutional congruence can be enhanced through tougher enforcement of the university alcohol policy and the residence life alcohol policy. Tougher enforcement of these alcohol policies could lead to positive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**

Nearly all of the student participants in this study indicated that the lack of or inconsistent enforcement of the residence life alcohol policy was another leading factor in contributing to the mixed messages students receive about alcohol and to alcohol-related institutional incongruence. Several of the student participants asserted that the lack of or inconsistent enforcement of the residence life alcohol policy actually promotes alcohol consumption among students living in the residence halls and the on-campus cooperative living units.

Research is beginning to show an increase in students' acceptance of and support for tougher institutional policies on alcohol as well as tougher enforcement of them (Wechsler,

Nelson, et al., 2000). Uniform and consistent enforcement of “simple” alcohol violations on campus is resulting in a significant decrease in complex/serious violations (Cohen & Rogers, 1997). University officials must re-establish the rights of students to live and learn in environments free of alcohol-related distractions and harm by maintaining tough alcohol policies and enforcement practices for students living on campus (DeJong, 1999). Policy enforcement messages to students should communicate that the university is:

obligated to enforce the minimum age drinking law. This does not mean curfews, bed checks, dorm searches, hall monitors, and other intrusive enforcement measures. What it does mean is that any infraction of which school officials become aware will be treated as a serious breach of the law, which it is. (p. 2)

Related to tougher alcohol policies and enforcement, some higher education institutions have adopted parental notification policies in which parents are notified of students’ alcohol violations. In this study, the majority of faculty, some administrators, and few students were supportive of parental notification. Early research on parental notification indicates “more favorable than unfavorable effects” on the number of on-campus alcohol violations as a result of such policies, and parents appear to be highly supportive of such notification (Palmer et al., 2001). A parental notification policy could complement other university efforts related to tougher enforcement of alcohol policies.

Tougher enforcement of the university alcohol policy and the residence life alcohol policy can have a positive effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students’ attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

**Conclusion Four: Alcohol-related institutional congruence can be enhanced by centralizing and integrating the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. Centralizing and integrating these programs and initiatives could lead to positive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**

Centralizing and integrating the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives were cited by the majority of participants, particularly administrators and students, as strategies to decrease some of the confusion and dissonance related to alcohol among members of the university community, particularly students. Research also strongly supports the centralization and integration of the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention initiatives. Centralizing and integrating the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives are imperative to ensure that such programs and initiatives are widely known, accessible, and supported by members of the university community, particularly students (Milgram & Anderson, 1996).

Centralizing and integrating the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives does not mean that university departments should cease their individual alcohol education and abuse prevention efforts. This does mean that the university should link its major alcohol education and abuse prevention efforts organizationally, financially, and, if possible, physically to strengthen their collective message and impact and their ability to work together. This centralization and integration could lead to increased awareness among administrators, faculty, and students about these programs and initiatives. Separating these programs and initiatives by division or department only weakens their collective message and impact and their ability to work together.



Centralizing and integrating the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives can have a positive effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

**Conclusion Five: Alcohol-related institutional congruence can be enhanced by establishing a formal relationship and greater communication between university officials and city leaders and by collaborating with local bar owners and liquor purveyors. Greater communication and collaboration among university officials, city leaders, and local bar owners and liquor purveyors could lead to positive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**

Establishing greater communication and collaboration among university officials, city leaders, and local bar owners and liquor purveyors were cited by the majority of participants as critical strategies to increase alcohol-related institutional congruence and to positively affect students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Research also supports greater communication and collaboration between the university and community. Effective alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives should be supported by the community and founded on collaboration with community-based programs (Milgram & Anderson, 1996). Specifically, effective alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives enlist local community support, coordinate with community prevention efforts, and work with local businesses and bars (Epstein, 1995).

The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1997) Presidents Leadership Group recommended greater communication and collaboration between the university and community in two of its proposals for effective prevention:

**Proposal 7. College presidents should appoint a campus-wide task force that (a) includes other senior administrators, faculty, and students, (b) has community representation [emphasis added], and (c) reports directly to the president. (p. 26)**

**Proposal 8. College presidents should appoint other senior administrators, faculty, and students to participate in a campus-community coalition that is mandated to address alcohol and other drug issues in the community as a whole [emphasis added]. (p. 26)**

**University officials should have a formal relationship and official forum for discussing issues of mutual interest and concern with city leaders regarding alcohol-related issues, programs, and initiatives. Holding regular meetings to discuss these issues, as well as formalizing the role of city leaders on the university alcohol committee could formalize the sometimes too informal relationship and incidental communication between university officials and city leaders. There also should be ongoing communication between the city officials (e.g., police department, city manager's office) and the university officials who are directly involved in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives.**

**DeJong (1999) asserted that is important for college students, particularly new students, to understand that the university and community are equal partners in combating the problem of students' illegal use and abuse of alcohol. The university should communicate to its students that university officials have:**

**joined with local community leaders, law enforcement personnel, and businesses in a town-gown coalition that will ensure that students receive a**

**clear and consistent message about responsible alcohol service and consumption. (pp. 1-2)**

**Greater collaboration should be fostered with local bar owners and liquor purveyors. Wechsler, Nelson, et al. (2000) asserted that two major factors contributing to student alcohol abuse – high availability and low cost of alcohol – can be addressed effectively only through greater collaboration with local bar owners and liquor purveyors. A highly controversial and political issue for some higher education institutions, collaborating with local bar owners and liquor purveyors does not have to be viewed as a “win-lose” situation. Mutually satisfying outcomes can be achieved if the collaboration is designed in the best interest of both parties. The key to such collaboration is securing the commitment from university officials and local bar owners and liquor purveyors to come to the same table to communicate their interests and issues. This collaboration also could result in increased understanding among local bar owners and liquor purveyors about the university’s philosophy, policies, and programs related to alcohol.**

**Establishing a formal relationship and greater communication between university officials and city leaders and by collaborating with local bar owners and liquor purveyors can have a positive effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students’ attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**

**Conclusion Six: Alcohol-related institutional congruence can be enhanced by increasing the level of student involvement in alcohol-related policy and program development and the extent of student participation in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. Increasing students' level of involvement and extent of participation could lead to positive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**

Increasing the level of student involvement in alcohol-related policy and program development and the extent of student participation in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives were cited by the majority of participants in this study as significant steps toward increasing alcohol-related institutional congruence and positively affecting students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Both the findings from this study and the research literature suggest that students, as primary receivers of the university's alcohol-related policies and programs, must be active at every level of policy and program development, implementation, and evaluation.

Students are critical to the successful development, implementation, and evaluation of alcohol-related policies and programs and alcohol abuse prevention initiatives because their direct involvement and participation lead to increased ownership in such policies and initiatives by university students, in general (NIAAA, 2002). Student input and involvement in university alcohol-related policies and programs and alcohol abuse prevention initiatives also are key to changing the accepted alcohol-related practices and traditions on campus (Edwards & Leonard, 1994). The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1998) advocated increasing the level of student involvement in alcohol-related policy and program development and the extent of student participation in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives:

**Students have traditionally been involved in AOD [alcohol and other drug] prevention efforts as peer educators in formal programs that have the goal of changing the awareness and knowledge of other students. However, student involvement in building campus and community coalitions, developing policies, and planning, implementing, and evaluating programs can make these prevention strategies come alive for other students. Participation in these efforts can help students develop a sense of ownership of prevention activities and lead to wider campus support. Involving students in designing and implementing an AOD program can also more effectively tailor the strategy to an individual campus. (p. 1)**

**Kuh et al. (1991) also asserted that increased student involvement and participation in various university programs and activities can be promoted if there is institutional value in and compatibility with those in which students are involved:**

**A high level of student participation in educationally purposeful activities can be promoted if these activities, and the policies and practices that support them, are compatible with the institution's mission, philosophy, and culture. (p. 341)**

**The findings from this study revealed that increasing students' level of involvement and extent of participation in meaningful educational activities related to alcohol (i.e., alcohol-related policy and program development) provides students with a greater sense of ownership in addressing the problem of student alcohol abuse.**

**Increasing the level of student involvement in alcohol-related policy and program development and the extent of student participation in alcohol education and abuse**

prevention programs and initiatives can have a positive effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

**Conclusion Seven: Alcohol-related institutional congruence can be enhanced by increasing the level of institutional priority given to the university alcohol committee. Increasing the level of institutional priority given to this committee could lead to positive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**

Increasing the level of institutional priority given to the university alcohol committee was cited by the majority of administrator participants and some of the faculty and student participants as a means of increasing alcohol-related institutional congruence and positively affecting students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. One of the administrator participants in this study articulated the need for the university alcohol committee to be an ongoing, visible, and powerful commitment to the problem of student alcohol abuse, not just an ad hoc committee that comes and goes as necessitated by tragic events:

The commitment to the issue of alcohol consumption on this campus has to be removed from being event-driven. A tragic event formed the Task Force.

The Task Force will not get any additional recognition or any additional strength until the next [tragic] event....There should be somebody who should be an alcohol czar on this campus that has the ability to cross lines and walk in people's offices and say this is a problem, this is in your realm and we need to talk about this. There has to be an ongoing commitment. It's a war that we will probably never win. (Tape 23, p. 13)

Increasing the level of institutional priority given to the university alcohol committee can be accomplished by elevating its status to an official governance committee or one with equally broad decision- and policy-making authority. This could 1) empower and position the committee to make alcohol-related policy decisions that are consistent with institutional priorities, 2) engage the appropriate administrators, faculty, students, city leaders, and other university stakeholders in alcohol-related decision- and policy-making, and 3) increase the likelihood of appropriate institutional support and funding. With an increased level of institutional priority given to the university alcohol committee, which in turn could lead to greater institutional authority and funding, the university's major alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives could benefit.

Specifically, on-campus alcohol-free social programming could become a beneficiary of additional institutional funding. As the findings from this study revealed, on-campus alcohol-free social programming needs support not only in terms of student awareness and participation, but also in terms of institutional funding. Only through ongoing, adequate institutional funding can on-campus alcohol-free social programming become a viable, competitive social alternative to the local bars for students. If targeting and reaching the "right" students, on-campus alcohol-free social programming can have a greater positive impact on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

The legitimacy that could accompany an increased level of institutional priority given to the university alcohol committee could heighten its visibility among members of the university community, particularly faculty. Although some faculty are unwilling to become involved in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, some are willing. Increasing the level of institutional priority given to the university alcohol

committee could indirectly influence more faculty to become involved in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. Increased faculty involvement in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives is key to effectively addressing the problem of student alcohol abuse (HEC, 1999; Baker & Broek, 1995; Milgram & Anderson, 1996; Wadsworth et al., 1994).

The university alcohol committee should be allied organizationally with departments that add to its efforts, credibility, and resources. The university alcohol committee should have representation from administrators, faculty, students, alumni, parents, and various community representatives, and this committee should report directly to the president of the institution (DeJong et al., 1998; HEC, 1997). The university alcohol committee should be institutionalized and positioned to affect policy formation, communication, and enforcement, and its membership should have strong ties to both the community and the campus to create the necessary "ripple effect" (Mills-Novoa, 1994). In addition, students should be made aware that there is an official university alcohol committee with official representation from students, and it is this committee's role to ensure that the rights of responsible students are not compromised by other students' alcohol consumption (DeJong, 1999).

The same two proposals from The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1997) Presidents Leadership Group that relate to greater communication and collaboration with the community also relate to the university alcohol committee:

**Proposal 7.** College presidents should appoint a campus-wide task force that  
*(a)* includes other senior administrators, faculty, and students, *(b)* has  
 community representation, and *(c)* reports directly to the president. (p. 26)



**Proposal 8. College presidents should appoint other senior administrators, faculty, and students to participate in a campus-community coalition that is mandated to address alcohol and other drug issues in the community as a whole. (p. 26)**

**The university alcohol committee, if given the appropriate level of institutional priority, authority, leadership, membership, and funding, can be a force in increasing alcohol-related institutional congruence and positively affecting students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**

**Conclusion Eight: Alcohol-related institutional congruence can be enhanced by eliminating the campus social normative marketing campaign or similar peer norms correction initiatives. Eliminating this campaign or similar initiatives could lead to positive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.**

**An overwhelming majority of participants in this study were concerned about the campus social normative marketing campaign. The majority of faculty participants had little or no awareness or knowledge of the campaign. Those faculty who did have knowledge of the campaign were concerned that the overarching message of the campaign conflicted with other university messages on student alcohol consumption. The administrator participants had divergent opinions about the effectiveness of the social normative marketing campaign, but nearly all of them expressed concerns about the mixed messages to students inherent in the campaign. Nearly all of the student participants asserted that the social normative marketing campaign was a "joke" and speculated that the campaign might actually be encouraging students' alcohol consumption.**

The majority of administrator and student participants and some faculty participants maintained that the social normative marketing campaign was not integrated well organizationally or philosophically with other university alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. Some of these participants also speculated that this lack of organizational and philosophical integration could be contributing indirectly to the lack of student involvement in alcohol-related policy and program development and the lack of student participation in alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. The majority of administrator and student participants asserted that the social normative marketing campaign was a leading contributing factor to alcohol-related institutional incongruence.

Campus social normative marketing campaigns and similar peer norms correction initiatives have proven to be moderately effective in reducing binge/heavy episodic drinking among college students, as supported through this study's literature review. However, the findings from this study support the assertion of Keeling (2000) that such initiatives can cause harm by producing the opposite effect on some students' alcohol consumption. Alcohol abuse prevention initiatives, such as campus social normative marketing and peer norms correction, with broad prevention messages:

[run] substantial risks of causing harm – not only by misleading students, but by creating pressure on some subgroups to adopt behaviors that are actually less healthy than their current ones and reinforcing the unhealthy, but accurate, perceptions of others. Social norms programs also risk overlooking the ultimate hyper-variability of human nature. (p. 56)

According to Keeling (2000), “more and better research, with greater and greater rigor” (p. 56) is needed on campus social normative marketing campaigns and on similar peer norms correction initiatives from a variety of different campuses and from a variety of different institutional types. The university involved in this study could be one of the campuses or institutional types where the institutional fit, support, and/or alcohol culture are not appropriate for this type of initiative to be effective. Thus, eliminating the campus social normative marketing campaign or similar peer norms correction initiatives at this university or other institutions is appropriate when considering all of the institutional variables, particularly institutional fit, support, and alcohol culture.

Only through valid longitudinal quantitative data can this university or other institutions measure the actual effects of the campus social normative marketing campaign or of similar peer norms correction initiatives on students’ alcohol consumption. Based on the data from this qualitative study, eliminating the campus social normative marketing campaign or similar peer norms correction initiatives can have a positive effect on alcohol-related institutional congruence and on students’ attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

### **Further Research**

In general, this study revealed that both alcohol-related institutional congruence and student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development have positive effects on students’ attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. However, these general findings along with other findings from this study should be interpreted with some caution. Whereas these findings are significant given the problem of alcohol abuse among college students and its impact on higher education, this study is not without its limitations.

First, because this study involved research participants from only one institution, specifically a large, state-assisted Midwestern Doctoral/Research University – Extensive institution (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2000 Ed.), the results and conclusions cannot be presumed to be representative of or transferable to other large, state-assisted Doctoral/Research University – Extensive institutions, nor can they be presumed to be representative of or transferable to other types of institutions. Furthermore, regional differences could affect the transferability of the study's conclusions to higher education institutions located in other areas of the country. Any generalizations from this study, as they might apply to the larger population of higher education institutions, should be made carefully.

Secondly, this study was based primarily on the perceptions and constructions of 33 research participants, the majority of whom were involved directly or associated closely with the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives. A different participant sample, for example, one with participants who have little or no involvement or association with the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, could have produced different results. Further research should consider a sample of participants whose level of involvement or association with the university's alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives is more equally balanced (i.e., participants who have direct involvement or close association and those who have little or no involvement or association).

Finally, while this study revealed that both alcohol-related institutional congruence and student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development have positive effects on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, this study did not attempt to

determine the statistical significance of these effects. Further research to determine the statistical significance of these effects would be a natural follow-up study utilizing quantitative research methods. What warrants further study is not *if* alcohol-related institutional congruence and student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development have positive effects on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, but rather *how much*.

Beyond its limitations, this study provides important implications for further research that warrant consideration by higher education officials. This study did not replicate or extend previous research on the effect of alcohol-related institutional congruence on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. It did confirm, however, The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (1997) Presidents Leadership Group's position that higher education institutions can have a greater positive effect on alcohol abuse among college students by working to ensure that all elements of the college community avoid sending students mixed, incongruent messages about alcohol. This study also supports the assertion of Pierce (2000) that higher education institutions need to eliminate the mixed messages about alcohol that exist in the college environment in order to reduce alcohol abuse among college students.

This study did not replicate or extend previous research on the effect of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. This study did confirm, however, that both the level of student involvement and extent of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development are critical to effective university alcohol education and abuse prevention programs and initiatives, which in turn can have a positive effect on students' attitudes and

behaviors related to alcohol (Edwards & Leonard, 1994; HEC, 1997; HEC, 1998; NIAAA, 2002).

The most important implications from this study that warrant consideration by higher education officials are its findings on the positive effect of clear, congruent institutional philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. These findings parallel those from the Involving Colleges study (Kuh et al., 1991) and its findings on the positive effect of clear, consistent institutional messages on students' attitudes and behaviors, in general. The findings from Involving Colleges revealed:

A high level of student participation in educationally purposeful activities can be promoted if these activities, and the policies and practices that support them, are compatible with the institution's mission, philosophy, and culture....A clear, coherent mission gives direction to student learning and minimizes confusion and uncertainty about what the institution is and aspires to be....The most powerful factor in focusing student behavior is the institution's mission and philosophy. (pp. 341-342)

Framed within an alcohol-specific context, this study revealed that a clear, congruent philosophy on alcohol gives direction to student learning and personal development related to alcohol (i.e., students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol), and that an unclear, incongruent philosophy on alcohol negatively affects students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Thus, this study revealed that a powerful factor in focusing students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol is the institution's philosophy on alcohol.

**In addition to developing strategies to avoid sending students mixed messages about alcohol and to eliminate the mixed messages that exist in the college environment, the challenge for higher education institutions is to assess the degree to which their current philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol are congruent (or incongruent) and the effect of such congruence (or incongruence) on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Given the magnitude of the problem of alcohol abuse among college students and its impact on higher education, institutions cannot afford to send students mixed, incongruent messages about alcohol. Higher education institutions have a responsibility to all of their stakeholders, especially students, to expand their understanding of this issue through further research.**

## **APPENDIX A. FORMAL RESEARCH REQUEST**



November 16, 2001

*Senior Student Affairs Officer*

*Title*

*Address*

*University*

*City, State Zip Code*

*Dear Senior Student Affairs Officer:*

Please accept this letter as a formal request to conduct my dissertation research at *[the university]*. As you know from your review of two related documents, I am researching the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. I have received approval from my Program of Study Committee at Iowa State University (ISU) to conduct my research at *[the university]*, and a verification letter from Dr. Larry Ebbers, my major professor, will be sent to you under separate cover. Upon your approval of my request, I will secure approval from the ISU Human Subjects Research Committee and forward the appropriate documentation to you as well.

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. For the purposes of this study, alcohol-related institutional congruence is defined as the congruence among the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and the congruence among administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and application of the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol. Further, this study will examine the relationship between student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. To accomplish this, my primary data source will involve personal, tape-recorded interviews with eight to ten research participants from three different constituencies: administrators, faculty, and students (both established leaders and some selected at random). A secondary data source will involve the review and analysis of alcohol-related written policies and educational program materials.

In addition, I would like to address two issues: confidentiality and why *[the university]*. In terms of confidentiality, I will not refer to *[the university]* at any time in my dissertation; I will refer to the research site only as a large, state-assisted doctoral/research extensive university located in the Midwest. As I am interested only in aggregate data generated by the research participants, the confidentiality of participant voices and perspectives will be protected. Whereas I will present selected participant quotations and excerpts in my dissertation, they will not be attributed to the participants in any way, nor will my analysis identify any participants by name or title/position, directly or indirectly. The data, along with my analysis, will be presented in the results and analysis and conclusions sections of my

dissertation. The deliverable to *[the university]* at the project's conclusion will be a copy of my dissertation. No additional written or oral communication will be produced without your written consent on behalf of *[the university]*. Given the sensitive nature of the research area, informed written consent will be obtained from each participant interviewed. The "Interview Informed Consent Statement and Form" is enclosed.

Why *[the university]*? Simply put, *[the university]* represents an institution with which I have potential access based on professional relationships. *[Additional text was deleted intentionally to protect the anonymity of the university.]* At the study's conclusion, I hope to provide *[the university]* with an objective view of how alcohol-related institutional congruence impacts the institution, specifically students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Conducted within the constructivist qualitative research paradigm, I will not attempt to generalize my analysis or conclusions to other institutions. Officials from other institutions may assess the application of this research to their unique institutional cultures.

I hope I have provided you with the information and assurances necessary to approve this mutually beneficial project. If you would like additional information, or if I may answer any questions, please contact me at 515.281.3934 (office), 641.753.0690 (home), or wrnelson@iastate.edu (e-mail). I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

William R. (Bill) Nelson

Enclosure

cc: Dr. Larry H. Ebberts, Major Professor, Iowa State University

**APPENDIX B. HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH APPROVAL**

**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**Human Subjects Research Office**  
2207 Pearson Hall, Room 15  
Ames, IA 50011-2207  
515/294-4566  
FAX: 515/294-8000

**DATE:** November 28, 2001

**TO:** William Nelson

**FROM:** Janell Meldrem, IRB Administrator

**RE:** "The Relationship Between Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruency and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol" IRB ID 02-190

**TYPE OF APPLICATION:** ☒ New Project ☐ Continuing Review ☐ Modification

The project, "The Relationship Between Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruency and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol" has been approved for one year from its IRB approval date November 28, 2001. University policy and Federal regulations (45 CFR 46) require that all research involving human subjects be reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) on a continuing basis at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk, but at least once per year.

Any modification of this research project must be submitted to the IRB for prior review and approval. Modifications include but are not limited to: changing the protocol or study procedures, changing investigators or sponsors (funding sources), including additional key personnel, changing the Informed Consent Document, an increase in the total number of subjects anticipated, or adding new materials (e.g., letters, advertisements, questionnaires).

You must promptly report any of the following to the IRB: (1) all serious and/or unexpected adverse experiences involving risks to subjects or others; and (2) any other unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

The PI must retain the signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity. If the principal investigator terminates association with the University before that time, the signed informed consent documents should go to the DEO to be maintained.

You are expected to make sure that additional key personnel who are involved in human subjects research complete training prior to their interactions with human subjects. Web based training is available from our web site.

Eleven months from the IRB approval, you will receive a letter notifying you that the expiration date is approaching. At that time, you will need to fill out a Continuing Review/and or Modification Form and return it to the Human Subjects Research Office. If the project is, or will be finished in one year, you will need to fill out a Project Closure Form to officially end the project.

Both of these forms are on the Human Subjects Research Office web site at:  
<http://grants-svr.admin.iastate.edu/VPR/humansubjects.html>.

## Iowa State University Human Subjects Review Form

EXPEDITED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OFFICE USE ONLY FULL COMMITTEE	ID# <u>02190</u>
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PI Last Name Nelson Title of Project The Relationship Between Alcohol-Related Institutional Congruency and Students' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Alcohol

## Checklist for Attachments

The following are attached (please check):

13. ☒ Letter or written statement to subjects indicating clearly:
- a) the purpose of the research
  - b) the use of any identifier codes (names, #s), how they will be used, and when they will be removed (see item 18)
  - c) an estimate of time needed for participation in the research
  - d) if applicable, the location of the research activity
  - e) how you will ensure confidentiality
  - f) in a longitudinal study, when and how you will contact subjects later
  - g) that participation is voluntary; nonparticipation will not affect evaluations of the subject
14. ☒ A copy of the consent form (if applicable)
15. ☒ Letter of approval for research from cooperating organizations or institutions (if applicable)
16. ☒ Data-gathering instruments

17. Anticipated dates for contact with subjects:

First contact

12/10/01

Month/Day/Year

Last contact

04/01/02

Month/Day/Year

18. If applicable: anticipated date that identifiers will be removed from completed survey instruments and/or audio or visual tapes will be erased:

08/01/02

Month/Day/Year

19. Signature of Departmental Executive Officer

Date

Department or Administrative Unit

J. H. Schae

11/19/01

Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

20. Initial action by the Institutional Review Board (IRB):

☐ Project approved

☒ Pending Further Review 11/21/01

☐ Project not approved

Date

☐ No action required

Date

21. Follow-up action by the IRB:

Project approved

☒

Project not approved

Date

Project not resubmitted

Date

Rick Sharp

Name of IRB Chairperson

11/28/01

Approval Date

Rick Sharp

Signature of IRB Chairperson

**APPENDIX C. LETTER TO RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

**TO:** *Research Participant*

**FROM:** Bill Nelson, Doctoral Intern, Board of Regents, State of Iowa  
and Ph.D. Candidate, Iowa State University

**DATE:** December 4, 2001

**RE:** Dissertation Research Project

I would like to introduce myself. I am Bill Nelson, and I am a Ph.D. Candidate in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Iowa State University (ISU). *[Additional text was deleted intentionally to protect the anonymity of the university.]*

I am writing to request your participation in my dissertation research project, which is being conducted at *[the university]*. I am researching the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, which I will explain later in this letter. I have received approval from the ISU Human Subjects Research Office and *[the university's Senior Student Affairs Officer]*. For your information, I contacted *[the university's Human Subjects Committee Coordinator]* about my project and he confirmed that, given its approval from the ISU Human Subjects Research Office, no action/approval was needed by *[the university's]* Human Subjects Committee.

As mentioned above, the purpose of my study is to examine the relationship between alcohol-related institutional congruence and college students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. For my study, alcohol-related institutional congruence is defined the congruence among the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol and the congruence among administrators, faculty, and students in their understanding and application of the university's philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol. Further, my study will examine the relationship between student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development and students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. To accomplish this, my primary data source will involve one-on-one, tape-recorded interviews with research participants from three different constituencies: administrators, faculty, and students. A secondary data source will involve the review and analysis of alcohol-related written policies and educational program materials.

In addition, I would like to address two issues: confidentiality and "Why *[the university]*?" In terms of confidentiality, I will not refer to *[the university]* at any time in my dissertation; I will refer to the research site only as a large, state-assisted doctoral/research extensive university located in the Midwest. As I am interested only in aggregate data generated by the research participants, the confidentiality of participant voices and perspectives will also be protected. Whereas I will present selected participant quotations and excerpts in my dissertation, they will not be attributed to the participants in any way, nor will my analysis identify any participants by name or title/position, directly or indirectly. The data, along with my analysis, will be presented in the results and analysis and conclusions sections of my

dissertation. Given the sensitive nature of the research area, informed written consent will be obtained from each participant interviewed. The "Interview Informed Consent Statement and Form" is attached for your review.

Why *[the university]*? Simply put, *[the university]* represents an institution with which I have potential access based on professional relationships. *[Additional text was deleted intentionally to protect the anonymity of the university.]* At the project's conclusion, I hope to provide *[the university]* with an appraisal of how alcohol-related institutional congruence impacts the institution, specifically students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. Conducted within the constructivist qualitative research paradigm, I will not attempt to generalize my analysis or conclusions to other higher education institutions. Officials from other institutions may assess the application of this research to their unique institutional cultures.

I hope I have provided you with the information and assurances necessary to secure your participation in this project. I am conducting interviews the weeks of December 10 and 17. Each interview will last approximately 60-75 minutes. If you are willing to participate, please respond to me by e-mail. I then will follow-up with you individually to schedule an interview appointment at your convenience.

If you would like additional information, or if I may answer any questions, please contact me at 515/281.3934 (O), 641/753.0690 (H), or [wrnelson@iastate.edu](mailto:wrnelson@iastate.edu) (e-mail). Also, *[Senior Student Affairs Officer]*, as *[the university's]* contact person for my project, is happy to address any questions you may have. I look forward to hearing from you, and thank you for your consideration.

Attachment

cc: *[Senior Student Affairs Officer, title, the university]*  
Dr. Larry Ebbers, Major Professor, Iowa State University



**APPENDIX D. INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT AND FORM**

**Informed Consent Statement:**

"Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. This study is being conducted in conjunction with my dissertation research for my Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from Iowa State University. I will be asking you a series of prepared, open-ended questions that focus on your perception and assessment of the congruence among *[the university's]* philosophy, policies, programs, and practices related to alcohol, and the effect of this congruence on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol. In addition, I am interested in your perceptions of student participation in alcohol-related policy and program development, and its impact on students' attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol.

As I am interested only in aggregate data generated by you and your colleagues/peers, the confidentiality of your comments will be maintained. The information you share will not be attributed to you in any way, nor will my analysis identify any participants by name or by title or position, directly or indirectly. Your comments will be aggregated and analyzed with those of your colleagues'/peers'. The aggregated data, along with my analysis, will be presented in the results and analysis and conclusions sections of my dissertation.

Our conversation will last approximately 60 to 75 minutes, depending on your responses and any additional questions. If necessary, I will deviate briefly from my prepared questions to ask clarifying and/or follow-up questions. Because your participation is strictly voluntary, you may choose not to answer a particular question or to withdraw from this research study at any time. At this time, I would like to answer any questions you might have.

With your approval, I also would like to tape-record our conversation for the purposes of accurately capturing and retaining your comments for analysis. All of the interview tapes will be erased immediately following their transcription. May I tape our conversation?

Before I may proceed with the questions, I must ask for your written consent to affirm your willingness to participate in this research study."

-----  
**Signed Informed Consent Form:**

By my signature, I affirm my full understanding of the rights and guarantees/assurances afforded to me as a participant. I agree to participate willingly, without undue inducement or any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, or other form of constraint or coercion, in this research study. However, I retain my right not to answer a particular question(s) or to withdraw from this research study at any time.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 -----

**Contact Information:**

Dr. Larry H. Ebberts, Major Professor  
 Professor, College of Education  
 N226 Lagomarcino Hall  
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 (O) 515/294-8067  
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William (Bill) Nelson, Principal Investigator  
 Doctoral Candidate, Iowa State University  
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 (O) 515/281-3934  
 (H) 641/753-0690  
 wrnelson@iastate.edu

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