

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Alcohol Policies and Prevention Programs Committee Final Report

Presentation By

John D. Welty
President
California State University, Fresno

Summary

In November 2000, California State University Chancellor Charles B. Reed appointed a committee of presidents, students, vice presidents of student affairs, faculty, staff and alumni to review the CSU's alcohol policies and prevention programs following the alcohol-induced death of a student at California State University, Chico and incidents of alcohol poisoning at San Diego State University.

The committee began its work in December 2000. Chaired by California State University, Fresno President John Welty, the committee met a half-dozen times. Divided into six subcommittees, the members concentrated on broad policies that would be realistic and effective at CSU's 23 unique campuses, which range from a few predominantly residential institutions with a traditional 18-22 year-old student population, to the majority with large non-traditional, commuting students with an average age in the mid-to-late 20s.

Alcohol abuse is a threat to the health and academic success of CSU students, but prohibition of alcohol is not a realistic response to the problem. There is no single response to the issue that will "solve" the problem. Each campus should design programs that are appropriate for their institution and for their student subgroups. Additionally, the federal Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Act of 1989 requires all colleges and universities receiving federal funds to maintain alcohol and other drug prevention programs and to review their effectiveness at least every two years.

Background

The committee began its deliberations by meeting with state and national experts who gave presentations from legal, law enforcement, prevention, treatment and training perspectives.

After these discussions and subsequent meetings, the committee agreed on several points to guide its work:

- (1) Campus presidents must make the issue of student alcohol abuse a priority
- (2) All campuses should develop comprehensive policies that are consistently enforced
- (3) Prevention and education programs must be offered by well-trained staffs
- (4) Students must be involved in policy planning and execution to a significant degree
- (5) Treatment programs must be available for those students who need such assistance
- (6) Data must be gathered systematically to determine the success of policies and programs
- (7) A campus culture must be developed that encourages and supports healthy behavior.

The committee adopted the following principles to assist campuses in developing their policies and programs.

Guiding Principles

- Provide a safe and secure environment for all students
- Encourage student health and wellness in an environment supportive of learning
- Promote healthy choices for students
- Enforce laws and policies consistently as regards the use of alcohol
- Support safe, legal, responsible, moderate consumption of alcohol for those who choose to drink; do not punish responsible, legal behavior
- Encourage students to take responsibility for each other; Good Samaritan behavior should be supported and recognized, and students should be supplied with the tools to help others practice safe and responsible behavior
- Provide assistance, if appropriate, to those students who need support, treatment, and services
- Involve students in all steps of the process and program development
- Focus alcohol abuse prevention efforts on campus and community environments since the university is part of the surrounding community that influences students' behavior
- Use social norms principles and peer education as core components of an education and prevention program. (The Social Norms approach uses informational campaigns to correct widespread student misperception of peers' drinking. Peer educator programs, such as the BACCHUS and GAMMA Peer Education Network, use students to encourage their peers to develop responsible habits and attitudes regarding alcohol and related issues.)

The committee divided its work into six areas: (1) Policies; (2) Enforcement and Legal Issues; (3) Education and Prevention Programs; (4) Training, Intervention and Treatment; (5)

Assessment; and (6) Resources. Below are the recommendations from the committee and the six subcommittees that campuses and the system should follow to create and strengthen their alcohol-related policies and programs:

General Recommendations

1. The Chancellor should require campuses to develop comprehensive alcohol policies and programs that are consistent with each campus mission, have a commitment to holding individuals and student organizations accountable for their behavior and a commitment to offering effective education programs which are regularly assessed.
 - The following should be included in the policies: (a) a succinct philosophical statement unique to each individual campus; (b) a summary of federal, state and local laws; and (c) institutional regulations.
2. Each campus should actively apply its policies
 - Enforce existing “age 21” laws to help decrease alcohol consumption by minors
 - Enforce campus rules as well as state and local laws and regulations. For example, post the most relevant penal code sections on campus websites.
3. Each campus should communicate alcohol policies to new students and their parents before and when they arrive on campus.
 - Link all campus policies to CSU’s electronic admissions website, CSUMentor, so that alcohol policy information would be available about each CSU campus to all prospective students
 - Designate campus representative(s) who are charged with ensuring that all students, faculty, staff and administrators receive Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Act (DFSCA) policy information
 - Students should be made aware of the risks associated with illegal and irresponsible consumption of alcohol.
4. Each campus should create a university-wide alcohol advisory council, including community membership, which annually develops and reviews programs and goals, assesses the effectiveness of the campus program, and makes recommendations to the president. These councils should be under the direction of the Vice Presidents for Student Affairs.
 - Develop a CSU listserve of the chairs of each campus’ alcohol advisory council that would allow for information sharing
 - Arrange for the representatives to meet at and attend at least one alcohol education conference/workshop/seminar each year

- Consider the development of innovative and safe late-night and weekend programming alternatives on campus for students

 - Develop a collaboration/partnership among scholars, researchers, health and student affairs professionals to develop and implement research-driven programs to advance existing efforts to understand and change dangerous drinking behaviors and other issues affecting college students
 - Develop appropriate institutional controls regarding alcohol beverage industry funding and sponsorship of institutional and student-sponsored events
 - Adopt a policy that might state, “Alcoholic beverage trademarks or logos must be clearly subordinate to the sponsored event itself. Similarly, the name of an alcoholic-beverage manufacturer or product may not be connected to the name of the institutional event or facility, but may be promoted as a sponsor of the event”
 - Develop awards and other incentives to encourage student organizations and athletic programs to utilize other funding sources and positive promotional campaigns for events that are not alcohol related
 - Include in the councils’ campus representation from student affairs; student activities; Greek life; residential life; public safety; public affairs; faculty; campus alcohol educator; student health center; psychological services; student representatives (including athletes); foundation; dining services, or if appropriate, holder of university liquor license; community members, which may include alumni, local business owners, neighborhood bar owners, and residents
 - Work with faculty to consider infusing the curriculum with alcohol-related topics, such as having a marketing class develop a project aimed at new underage student program
 - Assess existing counseling/psychological services, campus wellness centers, peer education programs and health education programs and determine how best to provide enhanced alcohol-related services.
5. Each campus should gather data every two years to determine if its policies and programs are achieving the desired outcomes. Findings should be reported to the Chancellor and the Trustees.
- Assessment of program effectiveness can only be accomplished by employing the best available evaluation procedures and instruments. Several examples of national instruments can be provided to each campus council.
 - Include in their assessments the following characteristics:

Patterns of Student Alcohol Use
Consequences of Alcohol Use
Alcohol-Related Beliefs and Perceptions
Protective Behaviors
Environmental Influences
Effectiveness

6. The CSU should sponsor conferences in which campuses share best practices, policies and programs as well as feature state and national experts.
 - As a first step, sponsor the National Social Norms Conference with the BACCHUS and GAMMA Peer Education Network on July 18-20, 2001, in Anaheim, California
 - Support and appoint a team to attend CSU conferences on alcohol-related topics to learn the latest techniques and best practices to assist students.
7. State laws should be reviewed by the campus alcohol advisory councils and recommendations made to trustees and presidents for any changes that can enhance and support campus policies.
8. The campuses and the CSU Chancellor's Office should devote sufficient campus and system resources to ensure the effectiveness of programs and policies.
 - The Chancellor should provide up to \$25,000 Challenge Grants to each campus, with the campus required to match the amount and develop a plan to enhance existing activities using the grants created by the Chancellor. The campuses also should report to the Trustees and Chancellor annually what was accomplished with the funds.
 - The Chancellor should assist the campuses by providing a system grant writer to seek out opportunities and write proposals to secure private, corporate and foundation funding for additional alcohol-related program.
9. Partner with the community and law enforcement agencies to provide a safe off-campus environment, to enforce applicable legal sanctions, and to encourage legal and responsible behavior among students.
 - Reinforce legal and responsible student behavior
 - Inform students that being under the influence of alcohol is no excuse for inappropriate behavior, and reinforce that all sanctions will apply
 - Work with the off-campus community to enforce existing laws, decrease the use of alcohol in the promotion of businesses and events, reduce underage sales, curtail promotions that encourage binge drinking, and expand alcohol-free recreational options for young people.

10. Develop effective training, intervention and treatment programs that will work on all campuses.

- Institute annual orientation programs for organization advisers and for student officers that outline policies, expectations and information on alcohol use/abuse
- Include expectations of members, officers and advisers in the annual student organization registration documents that must be signed by both student organization officers and the faculty/staff adviser
- Develop alcohol and risk management education programs for student organization officers
- Develop a roster of faculty/staff with interests, expertise and who are available to provide in-class discussions/lectures or meet with groups of faculty, staff or students regarding alcohol use/abuse and related issues
- Train all those who regularly interact with students, such as faculty advisers, resident advisors, coaches, peers, faculty and student affairs professionals, to understand and identify alcohol-related problems and to link students with intervention services
- Include alcohol use and abuse information in the training of all campus peer advisers and residential staff
- Assess individual campus needs and determine what level of training should be developed and followed to meet those needs
- Adopt, at a minimum, a level one (basic) training program, which includes a campus-wide understanding of alcohol-related behaviors, new student and parent orientation sessions, and social norms training for selected campus officials
- Develop and implement level two and three training programs if the campus assessment process determines that there are significant numbers of higher-risk students groups (for example, Greeks, athletes and large residential populations) for which training should be mandated. Faculty and community resources should be involved at these levels
- Develop and maintain current community agency providers that can be of benefit to students.

The use and sometimes abuse of alcohol on university campuses is a national issue. How to deal with the issue is especially complicated on some California State University campuses where the majority of students are of drinking age. It is equally complicated at residential campuses with their younger populations. There is no easy solution or “one way” of doing things. In summary, what the Alcohol Policies and Prevention Programs Committee is recommending is (1) strong

presidential leadership that sets the campus tone; (2) a comprehensive review of existing campus policies; (3) creation of a campus advisory council dedicated to the issue; (4) development of realistic goals with an assessment component; and (5) enforcement of local and state laws. If these elements are in place, the Alcohol Policies and Prevention Programs Committee believes that the California State University will have moved forward in a positive way to address what is surely one of the major issues facing university campuses today.

The following resolution is presented for approval:

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the California State University, that the 23 campuses adopt and implement the recommendations of the Alcohol Policies and Prevention Programs Committee Final Report in Agenda Item 3 of the July 10-11, 2001, meeting of the Trustees' Committee on Educational Policy consistent with their individual campus missions, and that a report be made to the board every two years assessing the outcomes of their programs; and that. the Chancellor report at that time on the success of obtaining external funding for system and campus programs.