

Approved Actions

PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION

- ENFORCEMENT
- PREVENTION
- EDUCATION AND AWARENESS
- CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
- INTERVENTION
- ASSESSMENT

All of the recommendations were considered and distributed into six categories reflective of the Commission's understanding that, to change a culture of high risk use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs, strategies must be multifaceted. The 12 recommendations for action reflect the Commission's assessment of immediate priority, feasibility, and impact. In addition, the recommendations respond to President Atwater's expectation that they be designed to achieve maximum effectiveness, viability, and immediacy.

Enforcement

- Maintain an aggressive awareness campaign regarding the judicial sanctions for alcohol, drug, and related offenses; design programs that focus on student behavior code regulations.
- Insure that the campus judicial system continues to investigate the relationship between student behavior code violations and the use of alcohol and other drugs. Sanctions, including parental notification, referral for assessment and education, etc. should continue to be delivered in a timely manner in order to clearly communicate to students the consequences of misuse and abuse of alcohol and other drugs both on and off campus.

Prevention

- Provide more student-focused comprehensive alcohol prevention programs.
- Consolidate the Resident Safety Assistant Program (Housing and Residence Life) and Student Safety Team (Student Life) and expand the scope of peer environmental management beyond university-owned residential buildings and campus-based social/entertainment events.

Education and Awareness

- Focus attention on the education of new students by broadening and formalizing alcohol awareness and substance abuse prevention programs.
- Require incoming freshmen to enroll in a one-credit course that covers many aspects of college life including coping with the new atmosphere, the workload, and the effects of the use of alcohol and other drugs.

Campus and Community Environmental Management

- Delay "rush" within the Greek culture at least until spring semester or the entire first year of college.
- Build and nurture a culture of self-management and responsibility within identifiable student communities (residence hall floors and buildings, Greek chapters and houses, athletic teams and houses, off-campus student residential districts).

Expand the mission of the on-campus SOAR Floor to include community (floor, building) responsibility.

Facilitate communication and connection between community residents and neighboring student tenants.

Finalize and implement a Greek management plan.



Intervention

- Hire a full-time certified drug and alcohol counselor through the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services, who will provide programs, support groups, and treatment interventions related to substance abuse.
- Within 24 hours after a substance abuse citation, counsel each student who, as a consequence, required supervision by a responsible adult, hospital care, or incarceration.

Assessment

- Develop a systemized program of substance abuse assessment.
- Survey IUP students to determine their beliefs as to the causes of substance abuse on campus and possible remedies.

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Discussion of the Recommendations

In order for IUP to ensure a viable program for the health and safety of students, it will need to address many community issues and at the same time monitor and evaluate its efforts. However, substance abuse prevention programs are often difficult to evaluate. For example, there is a difficulty obtaining accurate information, evaluation periods are too short to notice any measurable effects, and many substance abusers are poly-abusers using a variety of drugs. Even with these problems there is much that can be learned from earlier evaluation outcomes.

The initial set of 12 priority recommendations are consistent with programs that report initial success, as outlined by Joy G. Dryfoos. The Commission's recommendations:

- Are comprehensive in nature, including strategies addressing enforcement, prevention, education and awareness, campus and community environmental management, intervention, and assessment;
- Tap the expertise and resources of IUP professionals who are highly connected to students and the campus culture;
- Recognize the importance of individual intervention;
- Draw upon students as peer mentors and educators;
- Are outcome-based; and
- Incorporate assessment into program development, evaluation, and improvement.

The remaining recommendations will be considered for future adoption.



Recommendations for Action

President's Commission on Reducing Student Substance Abuse Final Report

According to Joy G. Dryfoos, those programs that report initial success:

- Adopt a comprehensive approach
- Utilize those who have the most contact with students to deliver information and support
- Provide individual attention
- Focus on the acquisition of motivational interviewing and basic cognitive skills
- Provide social and life skills training to promote social competency and resistance to peer influence
- Involve students in decision making and exposure to the world of community and work
- Involve parents
- Provide staff development

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Approved by Tony Atwater, President

May 31, 2006



Approved Actions

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Commission Milestones

- November 1, 2005 Commission Formed
 - December 2, 2005 Subcommittees on Current Practices, Literature Review, and Best Practices Appointed
 - February 24, 2006 Subcommittee Reports Presented
 - May 1, 2006 Commission's Finalized Draft Recommendations for Action Presented to President Atwater
 - May 31, 2006 President Atwater Approves Recommendations of Commission.
- Students who arrive on campus with an expectation of a party school must have this image quickly challenged and come to realize that IUP is an institution of learning that is reflected by its culture and its pursuit of academic excellence.*

President's Charge

To improve the health and safety of IUP students, President Tony Atwater formed the Commission on Reducing Student Substance Abuse. To insure a more comprehensive approach to reducing student substance abuse could be developed, the Commission included more than fifty members representing IUP students, faculty, and administration, and leaders from the Indiana community and region. This community-based approach is an essential element of achieving long-term and sustained improvements in the alcohol culture.

Overview of the Commission's Process

At the end of October 2005, IUP President Dr. Tony Atwater discussed the importance of keeping IUP students safe and healthy from substance abuse problems. Although the use of substance abuse by IUP students did not indicate a problem greater than the national norm, it is still of great concern.

On November 1, 2005, the President formally established the Commission on Reducing Student Substance Abuse. President Atwater appointed a Commission chair to organize the Commission, select a steering committee, and select a cross-section of students, faculty, administrators and community leaders to participate and make recommendations.

A steering committee was assembled, and a strategy to accomplish the mission and charges of the Commission were developed. It was decided to divide the tasks of the Commission into phases and to establish sub-committees in order to more effectively produce comprehensive recommendations.

The structure and phases of development for the Commission were established using the following model.

Commission Structure and Development Phases

Phase One

- Select a Commission Steering Committee
- Prepare a mission statement
- Develop Commission goals

The mission of the Commission was to identify and recommend initiatives and strategies to reduce substance abuse among IUP students.

Dr. Atwater charged the Commission to:

- develop recommendations to reduce excessive high risk consumption of alcohol and intoxication by IUP students;
- develop recommendations to reduce the illegal use of substances by IUP students;
- develop recommendations to reduce under-age drinking by IUP students;
- develop recommendations to reduce driving under the influence by IUP students;
- identify and examine existing programs established at IUP over the last ten to fifteen years to reduce substance abuse by students; and,
- identify and recommend national "best practices" for reducing student substance abuse at IUP.

Phase Two

- Decide on Commission membership
- Establish Commission sub-committees
- Select sub-committee chairs
- Assign Commission members to sub-committees

Phase Three

Establish sub-committees:

- Current IUP Substance Abuse Programs** — Identify, discuss, and prepare an overview of current IUP substance abuse programs/efforts to reduce substance abuse by IUP students.
- Literature Review** — Identify, discuss and prepare an overview of other notable college substance abuse programs and research findings about college student abuse of alcohol and other drugs.
- Best Practices** — Identify, discuss, and prepare an overview of research-based college programs to reduce student substance abuse.

Phase Four

- Discuss feasibility for the applications of best practices programs at IUP
- Develop Commission's recommendations for action
- Produce final report

During the first week in November a steering committee consisting of the Commission chair, Dr. Robert J. Ackerman, Director of the Mid-Atlantic Addiction Training Institute at IUP;

Improving the health and safety of IUP students

Dr. Rhonda Luckey, Vice President for Student Affairs; Mr. William Montgomery, Director of Public Safety; and Ms. Robin Gorman, Executive Assistant to the President; was established. They quickly established a mission statement and goals for the Commission and decided on membership criterion. Participants were selected from IUP students, faculty, administrators, and leaders to produce a viable community approach to the problem.

The Commission consisted of 52 members, and on December 2, 2005, President Atwater addressed the Commission with his charge. At the same meeting sub-committee chairs were formally announced. Commission members, representatives of various student, campus and community groups or agencies, were divided into sub-committees based on interest and expertise.

By mid-February 2006, sub-committees had finished their assignments to identify current IUP efforts, a literature review, and best practices for reducing student substance abuse. Ninety-three recommendations were proposed. After duplication among the recommendations was eliminated, they were distributed into six categories, representing the elements of a comprehensive model for IUP.

Discussion of the Problem

Student substance abuse problems have been identified at colleges and universities for many years. IUP is no exception. Instances of underage drinking both on and off the campus occur regularly. Excessive alcohol and other drug use has resulted in poor student performance in the classroom, high-risk behaviors such as driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs, fighting, sexual harassment, arrests, and over-doses. In addition, substance abuse problems jeopardize the health and safety of students. *(Although IUP students use alcohol and other drugs, the Commission focused more on excessive alcohol use due to not only its wide usage, but also because of its relatedness to other drugs, its association to other related problems, and the necessity to focus the Commissions work more narrowly.)*

The extent of student substance abuse in college varies somewhat by location, type of institution, and students' perceptions of excessive use of alcohol and other drugs as a part of the college experience. Studies indicate the use of alcohol by college students falls into one of three groups. About 19-20% of students abstain from alcohol use, about 40% are convivial or social drinkers, and about 40% are episodic heavy drinkers, commonly referred to as binge drinkers. It is this last category that has had the greatest increase in recent years. Binge drinking is commonly measured by having five or more drinks during a single drinking episode for males and four or more drinks for females. Drinking patterns are usually evaluated in two ways. One is frequency, or how often a person drinks, and the other is quantity, or how much a person drinks at any one episode.

The consumption of alcohol may differ by gender, with male college students being at a greater risk for excessive drinking. Even though more men drink than women and even though the men consume a greater quantity of alcohol, the differences are rapidly disappearing. For both genders alcohol use is often event specific. That is, certain settings such as football games, holidays, end-of-the semester parties, are more likely times for heavy consumption. It appears that twenty-first birthday celebrations are a time of great risk due to high alcohol consumption.

Studies indicate that many students increase their drinking when they get to college. Thus there may be a preconceived idea about college life and drinking. Even though there are similarities regarding alcohol use between college bound young people and those not going to college, there are specific ideas about excessive drinking in the college culture atmosphere. However, the opposite appears true regarding using other drugs. Non-college young people have higher usage of drugs such as cocaine, marijuana, and tobacco.

Excessive alcohol use jeopardizes a successful college career. Heavy drinkers have lower grade point averages than other students, miss more classes, and do worse on exams. In addition to the safety and health risks for students, excessive drinking affects their institutions in many ways, such as property damage, legal implications for adjudicating students, health, safety and security, and the necessity for additional counseling services and prevention efforts.

In general, university leaders are more concerned about the negative consequences of high-risk drinking than are college students. This creates additional problems for those who are trying to improve student safety and health. It cannot be assumed that students want help or want to change.

Thus it is important not to sensationalize campus drinking, but at the same time to develop a viable program for reducing alcohol consumption and related problems. A problem for many campuses is that they create an effective program even though it might be met with ambivalence.

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Efforts to create a meaningful campus program must offer more than a message to quit drinking, or drink less, or that drinking will threaten a successful college career. It will require a delicate balance of research best-practices, environmental management, community commitment, institutional changes, and in some cases a willingness to confront head-on a label as a party school.

The identity and image of a university can be established either externally by students or internally by faculty, staff, and administrators. Every university that is identified externally by students as a

"party school" has the additional problem of challenging this image while trying to keep students safe and healthy. This is true for many schools including IUP. Therefore, it is incumbent upon IUP to define itself internally and answer the question, "If we are not a party school, then what are we?"

In order for IUP to define itself internally by the faculty, staff, and administrators, and not externally by the students, a comprehensive approach will be needed. This will require that IUP create a strong internal positive image of a university with a high academic standing, a place of learning, a culture conducive to supporting intellectual growth, and a level of commitment to a serious academic environment. Students who arrive on campus with an expectation of a party school must have this image quickly challenged and come to realize that IUP is an institution of learning that is reflected by its environmental culture and its pursuit of academic excellence.