

Student Drinking

April 1995



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Purpose

The goals of this survey were to investigate students' attitudes and experiences related to consumption of alcohol. Permission was obtained to replicate two questions from the 1993 Harvard School of Public Health study of college drinking in which Penn State participated.

Highlights

Although most students felt that drinking was not a problem, many reported experiencing unpleasant behaviors as the result of their own or other students' drinking.

Students suggested that the University have stricter policies to handle drinking behaviors on and off campus.

Students may differ in their perception of what constitutes "problem drinking." Students seem to be tolerant of social actions which influence many aspects of their collegiate life.

Participation Rate

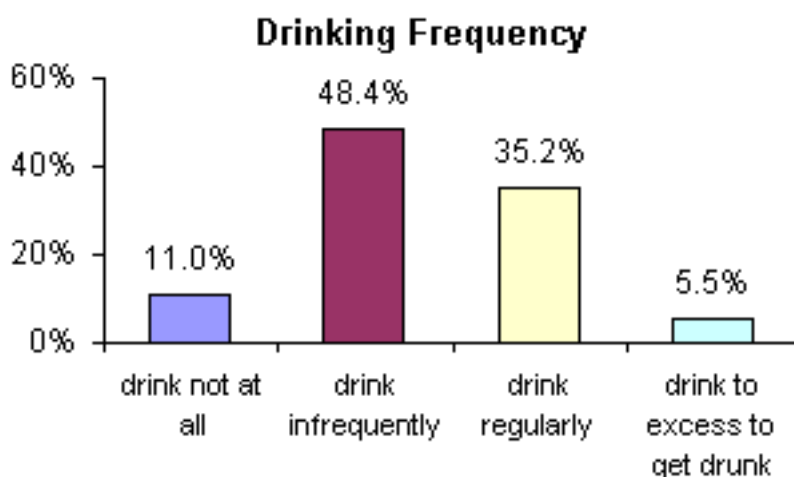
■ N = 313 (77.7%) agreed to participate
 ■ N = 90 (22.3%) did not agree to participate



Findings

● A majority (55.6%) of students do not think drinking is a problem at Penn State; most (77.8%) also think that alcohol consumption on the part of Penn State students does not differ from alcohol consumption at other universities.

● Despite the stereotype that Penn State is a "party school" and that alcohol plays a major role, many students reported that they had consumed little or no alcohol since the beginning of the school year. Nearly half said they drank infrequently.



● Students suggested that the University handle problem drinking behaviors by:

no idea	22.6%
more educational programming	16.9%
increasing restrictions (such as curfews, arrests, and more policing of fraternity areas)	16.4%
current approach fine	14.6%
ignoring behaviors	14.1%
other	8.2%
prohibiting alcohol in the residence halls	3.6%
publicizing sanctions	3.3%

● Only a few students (17.4%) reported feeling concerned about their own personal safety while attending a party where alcohol was served.

- Students acknowledged experiencing negative consequences as a result of their own consumption of alcohol.

Impact of Own Drinking			
	Not At All	Once	Twice or More
Have a hangover	N=84 30.4%	N=58 21.0%	N=133 48.2%
Miss a class	N=177 64.1%	N=30 10.9%	N=69 25.0%
Get behind in school work	N=208 75.4%	N=19 6.9%	N=48 17.4%
Do something you later regretted	N=171 62.2%	N=59 21.5%	N=46 16.7%
Forget where you were or what you did	N=194 70.3%	N=38 13.8%	N=44 15.9%
Argue with friends	N=174 63.0%	N=59 21.4%	N=43 15.6%
Engaged in unplanned sexual advance (N=3 1.9% - Prefer Not to Answer)	N=220 79.7%	N=29 10.5%	N=24 8.7%
Not to use protection when you had sex (N=1 .36% - Prefer Not to Answer)	N=256 92.8%	N=13 4.7%	N=6 2.2%
Damaged property	N=250 90.6%	N=13 4.7%	N=13 4.7%
Get into trouble with the campus or local police	N=257 93.1%	N=16 5.8%	N=3 1.1%
Get hurt or injured	N=237 85.9%	N=26 9.4%	N=13 4.7%
Require medical treatment for an alcohol overdose	N=274 99.3%	N=2 .7%	N=0 0.0%

Permission was granted to replicate this question from the 1993 College Alcohol Study coordinated by the Harvard School of Public Health.

- Many students acknowledged experiencing negative consequences related to consumption of alcohol by other students.

Impact of Other Students' Drinking			
	Not At All	Once	Twice or More
Been insulted or humiliated	N=212 68.2%	N=56 18.2%	N=43 13.8%

Had a serious argument or quarrel	N=186 60.0%	N=68 21.9%	N=56 18.1%
Been pushed, hit, or assaulted	N=261 84.2%	N=35 11.3%	N=14 4.5%
Had your property damaged	N=258 83.2%	N=32 10.3%	N=20 6.4%
Had to "baby-sit" or take care of another student who drank too much	N=95 30.6%	N=74 23.9%	N=141 45.5%
Had your studying or sleep interrupted	N=133 42.9%	N=49 15.8%	N=128 41.3%
Experienced an unwanted sexual advance (Prefer Not to Answer N=2 .6%)	N=226 72.9%	N=35 11.3%	N=47 15.2%
Been a victim of unwanted sexual experience (Prefer Not to Answer N=0 .0%)	N=302 97.4%	N=5 1.6%	N=3 1.0%

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