

Gwynedd Mercy University

Review of the Alcohol & Other Drug Program

Introduction and Overview:

The Drug Free Schools and Campuses Regulations (34 CFR Part 86) of the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (DFSCA) require an institution of higher education (IHE), such as Gwynedd Mercy University to certify it has implemented programs to prevent the abuse of alcohol and use or distribution of illicit drugs by Gwynedd Mercy University students and employees both on its premises and as a part of any of its activities.

At a minimum each institution of higher education must annually distribute the following in writing to all students and employees:

- Standards of conduct that clearly prohibit the unlawful possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees;
- A description of the legal sanctions under local, state, or federal law for the unlawful possession or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol;
- A description of any drug or alcohol counseling, treatment, or rehabilitation or reentry programs that are available to employees or students; and
- A clear statement that the institution will impose sanctions on students and employees and a description of those sanctions, up to and including expulsion or termination of employment and referral for prosecution, for violations of the standards of conduct.

The law further requires that the institution conduct a biennial review of its program with the following objectives:

- Determining the effectiveness of the policy and implementing changes to the alcohol and other drug programs if they are needed; and
- To ensure that the sanctions developed are enforced consistently.

Comprehensive Overview of Policies relating to Alcohol & Substances

Student Policies:

In alignment with our Catholic and Mercy identity, Gwynedd Mercy University promotes the educational mission of developing students' intellectual, moral and spiritual lives as they prepare for active roles in personal and professional service to society. As such, we expect our students to demonstrate a level of behavior and personal deportment consistent with those educational objectives. The University seeks to encourage a social life that is guided by care and concern for each individual and the welfare of other students.

Gwynedd Mercy University expects all students to adhere to local, state and federal laws regarding the possession, use or distribution of alcohol, drugs and illegal substances. The following university policies have been developed to promote these ideals.

Drugs:

Consistent with local, state and federal law, the sale, use, possession, manufacture or distribution of illegal drugs or drug-related paraphernalia, including the misuse and/or unauthorized possession and/or distribution of prescribed drugs is strictly forbidden both on and off campus. Infraction of these laws constitutes a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and shall be addressed through the University's student conduct process.

Alcohol:

The legal age to purchase, possess and/or consume alcoholic beverages in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is 21 years. Gwynedd Mercy University supports all local, state and federal laws relating to the use of alcoholic beverages and strictly enforces these laws both on and off campus. The University seeks to develop good habits and responsible behavior around alcohol use while allowing for moderate and appropriate drinking within the guidelines provided herein.

The following policies will be adhered to regarding the use of alcohol on campus:

Individuals Under the Legal Age of 21 Years:

- May not possess, consume, transport or be in the presence of alcohol;
- May not allow people who are of legal drinking age to consume alcohol in their room, suite or apartment;
- May not possess paraphernalia associated with the rapid ingestion of alcohol and/or drinking games, e.g., funnels and beer pong tables;
- May not possess or display alcohol signs or empty alcoholic beverage containers. Individuals 21 Years and Older:
 - May possess moderate amounts of alcohol for personal consumption inside their personal room or within a suite or apartment where all occupants are of legal drinking age; o Moderate amounts of alcohol are defined as one six-pack of beer or wine coolers (i.e. Seagram's, Mike's Hard Lemonade, Hard Cider), one 375 ml bottle of hard liquor or one 750 ml bottle of wine; o Students may not possess or consume liquor in excess of 100 proof, grain alcohol, or possess/consume caffeinated alcoholic energy drinks (including but not limited to: Four Loko, Sparks, Joose, Spylles, 24/7, or Torke);
 - May not possess paraphernalia associated with the rapid ingestion of alcohol and or drinking games, e.g., including but not limited to funnels and beer pong tables;
 - May not possess kegs of any size, or similar bulk or common source containers used for mass consumption of alcohol;
 - May not possess or consume alcoholic beverages in public areas including but not limited to hallways, lounges, stairwells, classrooms, restrooms or anywhere on university grounds including parking lots unless within the confines of a university sponsored event that has been approved by the Vice President for Student Services and Dean of Students;
 - May not provide alcoholic beverages to any person less than 21 years of age;
 - Must dispose of empty alcohol containers in a responsible manner.
 - An individual student's privilege to possess alcohol may be terminated or suspended at any time based upon violation of these policies, violation of law, misuse of alcohol, or other failure to prove responsible use.

The University reserves the right to determine the responsible use of alcohol in all circumstances.

Not Permitted Regardless of Age:

- Public intoxication as indicated by appearance or behavior such as slurred speech, unstable walk, unconsciousness, alcohol on breath, vomiting, disorderliness or offensive behavior resulting from alcohol use;
- Off-campus guests and commuters are not permitted to bring alcohol onto campus regardless of age.
- Alcohol use in university-owned or contracted vehicles;
- Possession or consuming of alcoholic beverages in public areas including but not limited to hallways, lounges, stairwells, classrooms, restrooms or anywhere on university grounds including parking lots is prohibited unless within the confines of a university sponsored event that has been approved by the Vice President for Student Services and Dean of Students. (Note that any door of a room containing alcohol that is left open is considered a public space.)

Residence Hall Policies

Residents and guests acknowledge that they are part of a living and learning community and are therefore subject to all University and Residence Life policies. For the purpose of this policy, a guest is defined as anyone who does not reside within the legally aged student's personal room. Consistent with safe hosting practices, the University has the expectation that students hosting others of legal drinking age will make available to guests non-alcoholic beverages and food items.

Students who are of legal age and who wish to possess and consume alcoholic beverages within their room are required to meet the following conditions:

- Completion of a one-time educational program on safe and legal possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages;
- Compliance with all policies listed for individuals 21 and older;
- The total amount of alcohol in a student's room, suite or apartment may not exceed the total amount permitted for each resident aged 21 or older.
- All alcohol must be stored in an enclosed area.
- The presence of alcohol within common areas of rooms, suites or apartments is prohibited unless all occupants are of legal drinking age. Common areas are defined as any space within a room, suite or apartment that is shared for occupants and guests who may not be of legal drinking age;
- Students who are of legal drinking age and who share a suite or apartment with anyone under the legal drinking age, must consume alcohol within the privacy of their room and must store all alcohol within the confines of their private room.
- A gathering of students where alcohol is present and being consumed cannot consist of more than double the occupancy of that specific room, suite or apartment (including the residents of that area) and all guests present must possess State IDs specifying proof of age. No guest under 21 years of age is permitted at gatherings where alcohol is present.
- Social Hosting:

o the residents in whose room, suite or apartment alcohol is being consumed are responsible for the behavior of their guests and may be held accountable for any policy violations. Guests will also be held accountable for their behavior and any policy violations.

It is the responsibility of the residents to verify the age of any person consuming an alcoholic beverage and ensure that minors do not consume alcohol and are not in the presence of alcohol.

o Residents are responsible for ensuring that guests of-age do not leave the room, suite or apartment with an open container of alcohol and that guests do not become intoxicated and/or disorderly.

o Students found responsible for violating hosting policies may be subject to disciplinary sanctions.

- A gathering of students may be terminated at any time if University officials determine the gathering as a threat to the health and/or safety of the community, is a disruption to the community, or is in violation of any university policies.

Use of Alcohol at Special Events

Allowances are made for special events for those 21 or older who receive permission from the Vice President for Student Services and Dean of Students and who follow these guidelines:

- No event may include the sale of alcoholic beverages;
- Individuals sponsoring an event must implement precautionary measures to ensure that alcoholic beverages are not accessible to or served to persons under the legal drinking age or to persons who appear intoxicated. Serving alcoholic beverages to a minor, or to a visibly intoxicated person, potentially exposes the events individual sponsors and the University to civil penalties as well as criminal penalties;
- At social functions where alcoholic beverages are provided by the sponsoring organization, direct access should be limited to a person(s) designated as the server(s);
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages is permitted only within the approved area designated for the event;
- Nonalcoholic beverages must be available as prominently as the alcoholic beverages;
- Reasonable portion of the budget for the event shall be designated for the purchase of food items;
- No social event shall include any form of “drinking contest” in its activities or promotion;
- Advertisements for any university event where alcoholic beverages are served shall mention the availability of nonalcoholic beverages as prominently as alcohol. Alcohol will not be used as an inducement to participate in a campus event;
- Promotional materials including advertising for any university event shall not refer to the number of alcoholic beverages (such as the number of beer kegs) available;
- Institutionally approved security personnel shall always be present during the event;
- Alcoholic beverages may not be sold or consumed at any athletic event sponsored by the University.

Note: To request to hold an event that includes serving alcohol, the requisite application must be completed. Forms are available in the Office of Student Services and Campus Life

Athletics Alcohol & Drug Policy:

The University's Drug and Alcohol policy can be found in the Gwynedd Mercy University Student Handbook. The Department of Athletics will enforce this policy and its guidelines. In addition, the department will abide by the NCAA Division III regulations on drugs and their usage.

To participate in athletics at Gwynedd Mercy University, you will be required to read and sign NCAA Drug-Testing Consent forms. By signing the form, you allow the NCAA to test you in relation to any participation by you in any NCAA championship for drugs banned by the NCAA under the bylaw 31.2.3.1 of the NCAA manual.

If you test positive, you will be ineligible to participate in regular-season and post-season competition during the period ending one calendar year after your positive drug test, and you will be charged with the loss of a minimum of one season of competition eligibility.

Recognizing that students and employees addicted to alcohol and/or drugs may wish counseling in this area, Gwynedd Mercy University encourages them to visit or call the counseling office (x571), the campus minister, SAAC members, or members of the Department of Athletics and Recreation. Confidentiality will be enforced strictly as required by the professional ethics of the individual counselor. Referral to an outside agency is readily available.

Employee Substance Abuse Policy:

University Commitment:

Gwynedd Mercy University is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment and to fostering the well-being and health of its students and employees. That commitment is jeopardized when any University employee illegally uses drugs on the job, comes to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or possesses, distributes or sells alcohol or drugs in the workplace. Drugs and alcohol abuse by any member of the University community runs counter to the mission and values of Gwynedd Mercy University.

University Policy:

Therefore, the University has established the following policy:

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1. It is a violation of university policy for any employee to use, manufacture, possess, sell, trade, or offer for sale alcohol or illegal drugs on the job or off university premises while conducting University business;
 - a. Employees directly engaged in the performance of work on a federal contract or grant are required to report any conviction under a criminal drug statute for violations occurring on or off university premises while conducting University business;
 - b. A report of a conviction must be made to Human Resources within five (5) days after the conviction. The term "conviction" means a finding of guilt (including a plea of nolo contendere) or imposition of sentence or both by any judicial body charged with responsibility to determine violations of state or federal criminal drug statutes;

- c. Gwynedd Mercy University is obligated to notify the appropriate federal contracting agency within ten (10) days of receipt of notice of an employee conviction.
2. It is a violation of the University policy for anyone to report to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
3. It is a violation of the University policy for anyone to use prescription drugs illegally. (However, nothing in this policy precludes the appropriate use of legally prescribed medications.)
4. The moderate consumption of alcohol at approved University-sponsored events does not constitute a violation of the Substance Abuse Policy

Sanctions

Employees:

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Sanctions include: corrective action; referral for treatment; termination of employment; and referral for prosecution for violations of local, state, or federal laws.

Students:

Gwynedd Mercy University considers certain violations of its code particularly egregious in nature and seriously detrimental to the health and safety of its community. The table below outlines the range of sanctions that may be imposed upon students who are found responsible for violating specific provisions of the Gwynedd Mercy University Student Code of Conduct and may not be the only sanctions issued. Each student will be sanctioned individually according to the circumstances of their violation.

These sanctions are aligned with the behavioral expectations of our community. Complacency surrounding alcohol, drugs, violence, or any form of injustice will not be tolerated on this campus. This is the overarching rationale for Gwynedd Mercy University's assurance to be a safe and healthy campus learning environment, one that both challenges and inspires students to be academically and personally successful.

Student Code of Conduct Violation	First Time Offender (Recommended Range of Sanctions – All may not be applied and others may be added)	Second Time Offender (Recommended Range of Sanctions – All may not be applied and others may be added)	Third Time Offender (Recommended Range of Sanctions – All may not be applied and others may be added)
Alcohol Policy Violation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educational task or service project 2. Parental notification for students under 21 years of age 3. Alcohol EDU for Sanctions course 4. Possible restriction from residence halls (for commuter students) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fine: \$100.00 2. Disciplinary probation for a minimum of one semester (residents) 3. Disciplinary probation for a minimum of one semester (commuters) 4. Referral to the Alcohol and Other Drug Counselor for assessment and completion of educational sessions 5. Educational task or service project 6. Parental notification for students under 21 years of age 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fine: \$200.00 2. Suspension/expulsion from residence halls (residents) 3. Disciplinary probation for a minimum of one year (commuters) 4. Referral to the Alcohol and Other Drug Counselor for assessment and completion of educational sessions 5. Parental notification for students under 21 years of age
Drug Policy Violation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disciplinary probation for minimum one semester 2. Parental notification for students under 21 years of age 3. Suspension from residence halls (residents) or permanent suspension of residence hall visitation privileges (commuters) 4. Referral to the Alcohol and Other Drug Counselor for assessment and completion of educational sessions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University suspension or expulsion 2. Restriction from University property during the suspension period or, if expulsion, permanent restriction from University property 	
Illicit Drugs (Sale or Manufacture of)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University expulsion 2. Permanent restriction from University property 		

Policy & Sanction Enforcement:

The primary enforcers of policy infractions and violations are the following departments: Public Safety & Security, Dean of Students, Campus Hearing Board, Human Resources, The Dean of Students & Vice President of Student affairs, Judiciary committee, Alcohol & other Drug Coordinator & Residence Life.

Public Safety is responsible for Campus rounds and Residence Hall Rounds twice a day. They are also called to respond to any suspicious behavior, odors, or suspected Drug or Alcohol Use. Residence life is also responsible for daily rounds and investigating any possible alcohol misuse on campus. They will collaborate with Public Safety, the AOD Coordinator, the Dean of

Students & Vice President of Student Services and the Judiciary committee when violations are identified.

All staff/faculty policy infractions are handled by Human Resources.

State & Federal Laws related to Alcohol & Other Drugs

Drugs or Narcotics:

State and federal law forbids the possession or consumption of illegal drugs or narcotics. Federal, and state law forbids the possession of illegal drugs or narcotics, such as cocaine, barbiturates, hallucinogens or other illegal, addictive substances. The sale, use, possession or manufacture of such illegal substances is strictly forbidden on campus. The sale, use or possession of drug paraphernalia such as rolling papers, bong, pipes, and the like are also forbidden on campus. Infraction of these laws constitutes a major violation of campus policy.

A violation of Pennsylvania's Controlled Substance, Drug Device, and Cosmetic Act calls for widely varying penalties depending on the nature of the offense (e.g. sale versus possession), the type of drug involved, the quantity of drugs involved and whether the individual's offense is a first, second, third or subsequent offense. A violation of the several federal statutes governing the sale and possession of drugs also calls for widely varying penalties.

Alcoholic Beverages:

Pennsylvania law states:

“Under Pennsylvania law, a person commits a summary offense if [they], being under 21 years of age, attempts to purchase, consume, possess or knowingly and intentionally transport any liquor or malt or brewed beverage. A person convicted of violating PA law in this regard will have [their] operating privileges suspended by the PA Department of Transportation. The duration of suspension depends on whether the offense is a first, second, third, or greater offense. In addition to this penalty, a person convicted of violating PA law in this regard may also be sentenced to pay a fine of not more than \$500 for the second and subsequent violation. It is also unlawful to knowingly represent to any person that a minor is of full age for the purpose of inducing that other person to sell or furnish any alcoholic beverages to that minor.

It is unlawful to hire or request any minor to purchase any alcoholic beverage from a duly licensed dealer. It is unlawful to intentionally manufacture or alter or secure an identification card that falsely represents the identity or birth or age of another person and it is unlawful to possess an identification card falsely identifying yourself by name, age, date of birth or photograph as being 21 years of age or older, or to obtain or attempt to obtain alcoholic beverages by using the identification card of another person.”

Definitions

Intoxication and/or drunk and disorderly conduct: A person who, having consumed alcoholic beverages regardless of age, experiences a loss of the normal use of their mental and/or physical

faculties. This includes (but is not limited to) incomprehensible speech, loss of motor coordination, aggression, abusive behavior, or loss of consciousness.

Open Container on University Grounds: Possession of an open container with alcohol is prohibited in all areas of campus including University grounds except at university approved functions. Students found in violation of this policy regardless of their age will be required by agents of the University to dispose of the alcohol and may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Alcohol/Drug/Mood Altering Substance: Alcohol, drugs, narcotics and/or other health endangering compounds which include but are not limited to alcohol, alcoholic beverages, tranquilizers, amphetamines, synthetic opiates, marijuana, LSD and other hallucinogens, glue solvent-containing substances, “look-alike” drugs, and all controlled substances identified in the following laws:

- Public Law 91-513—Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970 [Federal Law]
- The Controlled Substance Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act of April 14, 1972 [P.L. 233, No.64] and Amendments

University Jurisdiction: University premises or any university-sponsored activity.

Constructively Possess: Knowingly to have joint control and access with other persons to any alcohol, drug or mood-altering illegal substance.

Drug Paraphernalia: All equipment, products, and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use, or designed for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, converting, producing, processing, preparing, testing, analyzing, packaging, repackaging, storing, containing, concealing, injecting, ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing into the human body a controlled substance in violation of the law.

Possession: To hold or to have an illegal substance on your person or property without attempting to distribute it.

Health Related Information

Information and Health Risks Associated with Alcohol:

General Information

- Alcohol is a depressant, which means it slows the function of the central nervous system.
- Alcohol affects your brain. This means it results in loss of coordination, poor judgment, slowed reflexes, distorted vision, memory lapses, and even blackouts.
- Alcohol affects your body. Since it is absorbed into the bloodstream, every organ is affected which may increase the risk of life-threatening diseases, including cancer.

What's ONE drink?

Beer



4-5% ABV
12 oz

Malt Liquor



7% ABV
8 oz

Wine



12% ABV
5 oz

Liquor



40% abv
1.5oz

Your liver can only process one drink per hour. Please know what is in your drink, and limit your drink to one per hour, if your drink is more than one drink. For example, a long island is 6 drinks. Your liver will take 6 hours to process that ONE glass.

Standard Alcoholic Drink: Beer, wine, hard liquor (distilled spirits) all contain alcohol. The following common alcoholic drinks contain equal amounts of alcohol and are often referred to as a drink or a standard drink:

- One mixed drink containing 1.5 fl oz (44mL) of 80-proof hard liquor, such as gin, whiskey, or rum.
- One 5 fl oz (148 mL) glass of wine.
- One 12 fl oz (355 mL) bottle of beer or wine cooler.

Proof is the amount of alcohol in hard liquor or distilled spirits. The percentage of pure alcohol in the hard liquor is usually one-half the proof. For example, 100-proof liquor is about 50% pure alcohol. Thus, the higher the proof, the more pure the alcohol the hard liquor contains.

Blood Alcohol Content

Your BAC (Blood Alcohol Content) is the percentage of your blood volume that is alcohol. The more you drink, the more your BAC increases. As BAC increases, alcohol's effects become less pleasant and more dangerous.

The rate at which a person's BAC rises varies depending on:

- The number of drinks consumed (The more consumed, the higher the BAC)
- How quickly drinks are consumed (Alcohol consumed more quickly raises the BAC higher than when drinks are consumed over a longer period)
- Your gender (Women generally have less water weight and more body fat per pound than men. Because alcohol doesn't go into fat cells as easily, more alcohol remains in a woman's body.)
- Your weight (More weight = more water; water dilutes alcohol and lowers the BAC)
- Food in your stomach (Food slows down alcohol absorption. What is the best food to eat? Protein! It takes the longest to digest)

Binge Drinking

Binge drinking is a pattern of excessive alcohol use that increases a person's blood alcohol content very rapidly. This typically happens when men consume 5 or more drinks, and when women consume 4 or more drinks in about 2 hours.

- About 90% of the alcohol consumed by U.S. youth under the age of 21 is in the form of binge drinking.

Binge drinking is associated with many health problems, including but not limited to:

- Unintentional injuries (e.g. car crashes, falls, burns, drowning)
- Alcohol poisoning
- Unsafe sex and sexually transmitted diseases
- Unintended pregnancy
- Sexual dysfunction
- High blood pressure, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases
- Liver disease
- Neurological damage

Safe Strategies

- Choose not to drink or wait until you are 21
- Choose to spend less time with friends who tend to drink more than you like
- Decide not to attend social events where heavy drinking/drug use will occur
- Identify healthy ways to reduce stress
- Identify ways to be more comfortable in social situations without using alcohol/other drugs
- Use the buddy system and watch out for each other
- Avoid drinking games
- Avoid pre-gaming
- Drink slowly / Space drinks overtime
- Eat before and while you are drinking
- Alternate alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks
- Be assertive and clear about choices
- Be prepared with reasons to not drink or stop drinking beyond a point
- Share goals with friends
- Never leave a drink unattended
- Have a designated driver

Alcohol Related Sexual Assault

The model below focuses on the most common type of sexual assault that occurs between men and women who know each other and are engaged in social interaction prior to the assault - the prototypic university sexual assault situation. For more information: Alcohol Related Sexual Assault: A Common Problem among university Students (Abbey, 2002)

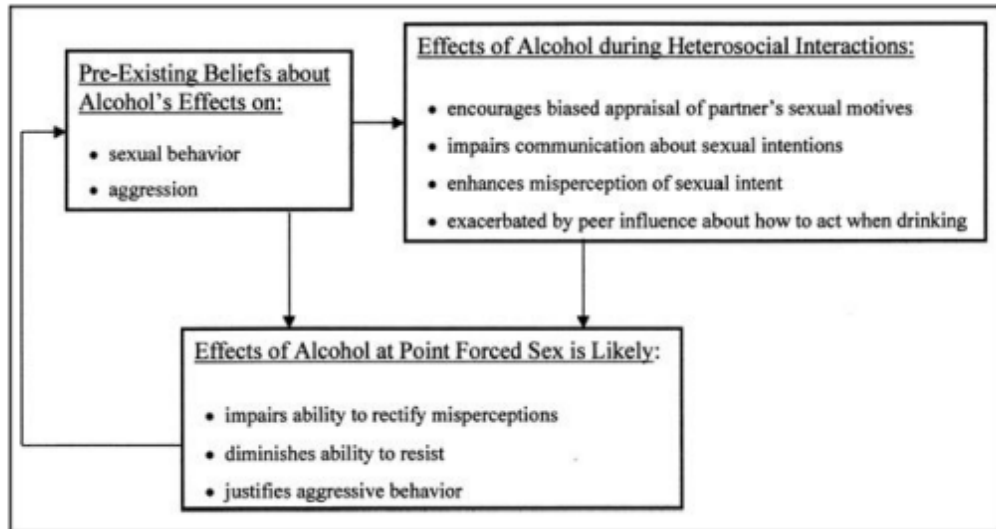


FIGURE 1. Conceptual model of alcohol-related acquaintance sexual assault

Information and Health Risks Associated with Other Drug Use

Marijuana

Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the mind-altering ingredient in marijuana. The typical amount of THC in marijuana ranges from 5% to 8%, which is much more potent than it was a few decades ago. Marijuana smoke contains more than 400 chemicals, and many are known carcinogens, and some are the same found in tobacco. Since marijuana smokers tend to inhale deeply and hold their breath longer than cigarette smokers, their lungs are exposed to even more smoke.

Short-term effects include: Delusions, increased appetite, increased heart rate, bloodshot eyes, dry mouth and throat, loss of short-term memory, dizziness, altered sense of time, impaired judgment, mood swings, inability to concentrate, loss of coordination, and loss of depth perception.

Long-term effects include: Risk of brain damage, mental depression, reduced immunity to infections, impaired memory and ability to learn, hallucinations and paranoia, chronic lung disease, heart disease, increased risk of lung cancer, irregular ovulation in females, and decreased sperm count in males.

Heroin

Even a single dose of heroin can start a person on the road to addiction.

Short-term effects include: Depressed respiration, clouded mental functioning, nausea and vomiting, sedation, drowsiness, hypothermia, coma or death (due to overdose).

Long-term effects include: Bad teeth, inflammation of the gums, constipation, cold sweats, itching, weakening of the immune system, coma, respiratory illnesses, paralysis, reduced sexual capacity and long-term impotence in men, menstrual disturbance in women, inability to achieve

orgasm (men and women), loss of memory and intellectual performance, introversion, depression, pustules on the face, loss of appetite, insomnia.

Prescription Drugs

Prescription drugs that are taken for recreational use include the following major categories:

Depressants: Often referred to as central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) depressants, these drugs slow brain function. They include sedatives (used to make a person calm and drowsy) and tranquilizers (intended to reduce tension or anxiety). Some drugs in this category (Zyprexa, Seroquel, and Haldol) are known as “antipsychotics;” some drugs (Xanax, Klonopin, Halcion, and Librium) are referred to as benzodiazepines (“benzos”); and some drugs (Amytal, Nembutal, and Seconal) are classed as barbiturates (sleeping pills).

Short-term effects include: Slow brain function, lowered blood pressure, confusion, dizziness, fever, visual disturbances, disorientation, lack of coordination, difficult or inability to urinate, slowed pulse and breathing, poor concentration, fatigue, slurred speech, sluggishness, dilated pupils, depression, and addiction. Higher doses can cause impairment of memory, judgment, coordination, irritability, paranoia, and suicidal thoughts. In addition, some people can experience the opposite of the intended effect, such as agitation or aggression.

Long-term effects include: Rapid development of tolerance, depression, chronic fatigue, breathing difficulties, sexual 47 problems, sleep problems, and increases the risks of high blood sugar, diabetes, weight gain, and withdrawal systems such as insomnia, weakness, and nausea if use is reduced or stopped. As a dependency on the drug increases, cravings, anxiety, or panic are common if the user is unable to get more.

Opioids and morphine derivatives:

Generally referred to as painkillers, these drugs contain opium or opium-like substances and are used to relieve pain. Some well-known brand names are OxyContin, Demerol, Tylenol with Codeine, and Dilaudid.

Short-term effects include: Drowsiness, slowed breathing, constipation, unconsciousness, nausea, and coma.

Long-term effects include: Dependence, addiction, tolerance, and withdrawal system such as restlessness, muscle and bone pain, insomnia, diarrhea, vomiting, and cold flashes if use is reduced or stopped.

Stimulants:

A class of drugs intended to increase energy and alertness, but which also increases blood pressure, heart rate, and breathing. Some well-known brand names are Ritalin, Concerta, Biphedamine, and Dexedrine.

Short-term effects include: Exhaustion, apathy, and depression. It is the immediate and lasting exhaustion that quickly leads the stimulant user to want the drug again and soon they are not trying to get “high but rather trying to get “well” – to feel any energy at all.

Long-term effects include: Addiction, hostility, paranoia, high body temperatures, and irregular heartbeat.

Antidepressants:

Psychiatric drugs that are supposed to manage depression. Some well-known brand names are Prozac, Paxil, Celexa, Zoloft, Effexor, and Remeron.

Short-term and long-term effects: Insomnia, irritability, nervousness and anxiety, violent thoughts and actions, agitation, suicidal thoughts or suicide, tremors, hostility, sweating, irregular heartbeat, aggression, criminal behavior, confusion and incoherent thoughts, paranoia, hallucinations, psychosis, akathisia.

Gambling:

Gambling is an activity or game where the outcome is uncertain, and the intent is to win a prize in addition to what was bet, usually money. Some common examples of gambling included lotteries, casino games (blackjack, roulette, slot machines, etc.), and sports betting (horse racing, football, soccer, etc.)

Short-term and long-term effects include: Spending more money on gambling than you can afford, needing to gamble with increasing amounts of money to get the same thrill, feeling anxious or stressed about your gambling, being preoccupied with gambling, such as constantly planning gambling activities and how to get more gambling money using gambling to deal with problems or difficult feelings (helplessness, guilt, anxiety or depression), trying to get back lost money by gambling more (chasing losses) lying to family and friends about your gambling, and borrowing or stealing to fund your gambling.

Nicotine:

Nicotine is a chemical compound found in tobacco plants and is a highly addictive stimulant. Nicotine is found in all tobacco products including cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco (dip, snuff, snus, and chewing tobacco), hookah, and most e-cigarettes and vapes.

Short-term effects include: increased alertness and concentration followed by a reduction in activity of brain and nervous system, increased blood pressure and heart rate, decreased blood flow to fingers and toes, decreased skin temperature, decreased appetite, dizziness, nausea, abdominal cramps, vomiting, headaches, and coughing, due to smoke irritation.

Long-term effects include: an increased risk of stroke and brain damage, shortness of breath, cancer (mouth, stomach, lung, leukemia, throat, etc.) chronic lung illnesses, high blood pressure, damage to blood vessels, stomach ulcers, and premature signs of aging.

Energy Drinks:

Energy Drinks are flavored caffeinated drinks that, combined with other ingredients, are meant to high increase energy and alertness. Caffeine is a stimulant and the primary ingredient. Energy drinks often include Taurine (an amino acid that helps build protein and can amplify stimulant effects), Guarana (additional caffeine source that increases the effectiveness of the caffeine),

Ginseng (herbal supplement used for increased energy), sugar, high quantities of b vitamins, and artificial sweeteners.

Short-term effects include: increased energy and ability to stay awake, difficulty focusing, agitation, restlessness, increased pulse, headaches, high blood pressure, dehydration, and increased impulsivity.

Long-term effects include: withdrawal side effects (depression, insomnia, sleepiness, etc.), anxiety, weight changes, malnutrition, increased risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, and personality changes.

Annual Policy Notification Process

In accordance with the Drug-free Schools and Campuses Act, Gwynedd Mercy University is required to provide students and employees with information about the unlawful use of drugs or alcohol on college property.

In this report, we will cover the policies and sanctions at Gwynedd Mercy University. We will also review the state and federal regulations related to Alcohol and Substances, as well as the health risks related to their use. You can find in-depth information on the Alcohol and Other Drug websites on treatment opportunities in our community. The University has a robust Alcohol and Other Drug prevention program, in this report we will cover and review this program in depth. The departments on campus responsible for overseeing, enforcing, mandating, and supporting this program include: Public Safety, Residence Life, the Judiciary Committee, Counseling and Alcohol & other Drug Services, Human Resources, the Vice President of Student Services and The Dean of Students.

Gwynedd Mercy University has various policies on alcohol and drug use and will distribute these to students, faculty and staff annually via the Griffin Portal. They are also available at all times through our policy website, and our Student Handbook/Code of conduct. The Employee handbook also contains these policies, which are distributed via the Griffin Portal Annually, and available at all times on the Human Resources section of the portal.

During employee orientation, new employees are given the opportunity to review these documents and are made aware of how to find them on the website/portal.

As a part of New Student Orientation, more in-depth information is provided to students about drug and alcohol safety, and student facing departments like Residence Life, Public Safety, and Athletics are also provided additional trainings.

Gwynedd Mercy University also posts information about alcohol and other drug safety across campus throughout the year, and offers frequent psychoeducational events, emails, and social media content.

Emails will be sent in the beginning of Each Semester (September and January) reminding students and employees of the policies on campus.

Report of Alcohol & Other Drug Violations:

Academic Year	Total AOD Violations	*Total AOD Referrals	ETOH / THC / Both
2009-2010	88	28	
2010-2011	92	38	
2011-2012	141	14	
2012-2013	146	25	
2013-2014	72	20	16 ETOH; 0 THC; 4 Both
2014-2015	19 (14 Res Life; 5 DOS)	3 (2 Res Life; 1 DOS)	3 ETOH; 0 THC; 0 Both
2015-2016	52 (42 Res Life; 10 DOS)	3 (3 DOS)	0 ETOH; 2 THC; 0 Both
2016-2017	46 (41 Res Life; 5 DOS)	6 (2 Res Life; 4 DOS)	3 ETOH; 1 THC; 1 Both
2017-2018	56 (48 Res Life; 8 DOS)	11 (5 Res Life; 6 DOS)	9 ETOH; 1 THC; 1 BOTH
2018-2019	69 (62 Res life; 7 VP of SS & DOS)	20 (13 Res Life ;7 VP of SS & DOS)	12 ETOH; 7 THC; 1 BOTH
2019-2020	4 Res life; 0 VP of SS & DOS	7 (7 Res Life; 0 VP of SS & DOS)	2 ETOH; 3 THC; 1 BOTH
2020-2021	12 Res Life; 0 VP of SS & DOS)	3 (3 Res Life; 0 VP &DOS)	1 ETOH, 2 THC
2021-2022	4 Res life; 0 VP of SS & DOS	2 (2 Res Life; 0 VP of SS & DOS)	1 ETHOH, 1 THC
2022-2023	7 Res life; 0 VP of SS &DOS)	1 (1 Res life; 0 VP of SS & DOS)	1 THC
2023-2024	19 Res life; 0 VP of SS &DOS)	5 (5 Res life; 0 VP of SS & DOS)	6 THC
2024-2025	21 Res life; 0 VP of SS &DOS)	2 (2 Res life; 0 VP of SS & DOS)	1 THC

Alcohol and Other Drug Program Review

Philosophy & Mission

Gwynedd Mercy University's AOD Services are based on a model of care that focuses on prevention, early intervention, education, and treatment. The services offer a holistic approach to health and well-being that is grounded in models of student development as well as current research with evidence-based health and mental health interventions.

The AOD Coordinator provides a range of services for the Gwynedd Mercy University community that includes: social norming information, outreach, assessment, education and referrals to community providers. The services provided are conducted on a voluntary basis or may be required as part of the judicial process. All services are free for Gwynedd Mercy University students. Students may incur a cost if evaluations and/or treatment are required to be received by a community-based provider.

Description of Programming

The AOD Coordinator provides numerous programming and outreach aimed at educating the University community, creating a safe/healthy campus culture, and reducing instances of alcohol and other drug misuse/abuse. Each initiative is discussed below.

Medical Amnesty & Good Samaritan Policies:

Highlighting the MA and GS policies has become a priority for our AOD program since the start of the 2021-2022 academic year. During orientation, students were provided cards that described these policies. Additionally, posters with these policies were hung in the Residence halls, and across campus. All AOD programming and events included a visual of these policies. *While hosting events, staff are encouraged to highlight the policy specifically and hand out cards with policy details. MA/GS cards have been added to student takeaways and resource packages.*

Training & Collaboration with Campus & Community Leaders

Residence Assistant (RA) and Orientation Leader (OL)

Every Fall, the AOD Coordinator, in conjunction with Counseling Services, provides training to both the RA's and OL's for that academic year. The AOD training consists of education about alcohol and other drugs by covering topics such as the impact on an individual's life, and tips for staying safe if choosing to drink. Emphasis is given to dispelling myths about alcohol and other drug use both nationally and on our own campus.

Collaboration with Resident Assistants

Throughout the year, the AOD Coordinator consults and collaborates with Resident Assistants who are interested in providing Alcohol Education to their residents for bulletin boards, programs, or events.

Athletics:

The Alcohol & Other Drug Coordinator has collaborated with the Athletic department to provide necessary psychoeducation about alcohol and other drug use. The AOD Coordinator typically attends the annual meeting for athletic coaches to provide program and statistic updates to the Athletic staff. In addition, the AOD Coordinator presents psychoeducation about alcohol and

other drug use safety at the opening meeting with Fall and Spring athletes. Attendance of the 24-25 AY meeting was disrupted due to staffing changes.

Social Work:

During the 2023-2024 AY, the AOD coordinator and the social work department work closely together to encourage student use of services and attendance of psychoeducational events and programs on campus.

Prevention Education Specialist Through Montgomery County:

During the 2024-2025 AY the PES and the AOD Coordinator collaborated on focus campus events highlighting current research on AOD issues impacting college students. These topics included alcohol use, gambling, substance use due to stress, and marijuana use.

Attention on First Year Students

Orientation Weekend:

For the 2023-2024 The Alcohol and Other Drug Coordinator presented an overview of AOD resources. This presentation also covered Alcohol and Other Drug Safety and necessary education to supplement the Alcohol 101+ content. In addition, the first use of the Grant Funded Bystander Intervention Program was initiated

For the 2024-2025 AY, The Alcohol and Other Drug Coordinator was not present to provide presentation material specific to drugs, alcohol, and mental health as orientation took place before the new AOD coordinator onboarded. The Counseling Services Director presented information regarding AOD during a shortened presentation.

The First Year Experience (UNV-100)

The AOD Coordinator was requested to provide a co-curricular activity surrounding alcohol and other drugs to the First Year Experience students. This is typically done by offering our AOD psychoeducational events as Co-Curricular Content. In the 23-24 AY, the AOD Coordinator and Counseling Director provided an overview of the counseling services available to students. This information has since been incorporated in the UNV-100 curriculum. AOD involvement was reduced in the 24-25 AY due to staffing changes.

Alcohol Education for First Year Students:

Alcohol 101+: For the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 AY, students were required to complete the Alcohol 101+ online training program. This was an interactive psychoeducational Alcohol education program. It also included a virtual bar to allow students to obtain education on how food, water, and alcohol impact BAC.

Resident Students

Welcome Kits

As part of the orientation process, the AOD Coordinator and Counseling Services typically provide a welcome kit of some sort to all new residents of the residence hall. This kit helps make

students aware of our services, and provides psychoeducation around alcohol and other drug safety, as well as mental health awareness.

2023-2024- Students were each given a bag of microwavable popcorn that included AOD safety information, the MA and GS policies, mental health self-care tips, QR codes to resources on campus, and contact information for Counseling Services.

2024-2025 - Distribution of AOD materials was not included in welcome kits due to the event occurring before the new AOD Coordinator onboarded.

Posters

Prior to move-in, posters are hung in the residence halls providing information related to alcohol and other drug safety, Counseling Services resources, and the Medical Amnesty and Good Samaritan policies. Also, monthly social norming posters were hung to provide students with appropriate representation of student alcohol and drug use on campus. Posters created in collaboration with students who were mandated to AOD violation sessions were distributed in the resident's halls that highlighted information about Alcohols effects on the brain and body.

Communication to and with the Campus Community

Outreach to Faculty

Throughout the academic year, the AOD Coordinator provides information and suggestions to faculty and encourages collaboration in creating and maintaining a safe, healthy campus community. This connection is maintained in the following ways:

- **Faculty mailing:** Every Fall, an e-mail is sent to all Faculty (full-time & part-time) with information about the AOD Coordinator's role on campus, relevant information, and suggestions for how to positively impact their students around the topics of drugs and alcohol.
- **Psychoeducational content:** During the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 AY, the AOD coordinator continued to include faculty and staff in the portal distribution list for psychoeducational posts.

Counseling/AOD Department Website:

The Counseling Services and Alcohol & other Drug website includes information on Alcohol and other drug safety, on and off campus resources, access to Alcohol 101+, AOD campus statistics, the Social hosting website, profile information for the AOD counselor, information for faculty and staff to support students, and the Alcohol and other Drug policies and student code of conduct. This website was distributed to all students, faculty, and staff via email. In 2023-2024 AY videos providing guided instructions on mental health techniques were developed by the counseling department and added to the website in a designated Resource Room. These videos were created by the counseling department using grant funding to make mental health techniques easily accessible to the student and faculty population at large.

Social Hosting Website:

This page is designed to be a course that provides information to students on how to safely host a party, what the rules and regulations in Pennsylvania are, and how to avoid dangerous situations. This website includes the AUDIT/CUDIT to continue to gather data on student substance use, and a posttest to ensure content retention.

Information on Athletics Website:

The athletics department allowed us to add a section to their website that included information on alcohol and cannabis safety and psychoeducation for their students. Also, during the Fall athlete meeting presentation, students are provided with information on alcohol safety, marijuana safety, QR codes to our resources, and Medical Amnesty/Good Samaritan pocket cards.

Commuter Letter

Every fall, the AOD Coordinator sends an e-mail to students who do not live on campus and are between the ages of 21-24. This information focuses on safe hosting practices, laws related to alcohol, and safe drinking practices if choosing to drink or serve alcohol. The distribution of this letter was disrupted in the 2024-2025 AY due to late onboarding of the new AOD Coordinator.

AOD Coordinator Involvement with University Events

Education around safe drinking practices if choosing to drink includes eating before and while drinking and staying hydrated. To relay a consistent message to students, water and pretzels are provided by the AOD Coordinator when requested for specific events. Therefore, if they choose to drink, they can do so in a safer, healthier way. Refreshments are paired with relevant literature. In addition, the AOD Coordinator is notified prior to each event and provides necessary suggestions.

Social Norms Campaign

Social norms theory posits that our behaviors are influenced by misperceptions about how our peers think and act. Overestimation or underestimation of our peers' behaviors can either increase or decrease our own behaviors, respectively. Therefore, correcting problematic perceptions will in turn reduce problematic behaviors, such as high-risk drinking. To have this impact on campus, the AOD Coordinator disseminates 1-2 posters campus-wide per month that provide accurate Gwynedd Mercy University or national statistics about alcohol and other drug use. These campaigns are also posted in university publications and on digital signs. As of the Spring of 2019, these messages have also been included in university social media (Instagram) accounts and "shared" by various programs and departments across campus. Information used in Social Norming Campaigns was gathered in the past from the NCHA surveys, but as of 2023-2024 updated information from the PIRE College Student Survey Report was used.

Birthday E-mails

At the beginning of every month, all residential students turning 21 years old receive an e-mail from the AOD Coordinator. While this e-mail encourages them to celebrate, it also provides tips for how to stay safer and healthier if they choose to incorporate drinking into their celebrations.

Poster Campaigns

Educational posters related to alcohol and other drugs are disseminated throughout campus monthly. Particular attention is given to holidays and times of the year that are notorious for high risk drinking to occur (e.g. Spring break; St. Patrick's Day; Halloween eve; etc.)

Meetings/Consultation with Residence Life Staff

The AOD Coordinator met with Residence Life Staff throughout the academic year to discuss concerns and ideas. Drinking and drug related issues on campus were discussed, the academic year was reviewed, and planning for the upcoming year occurred as well.

Social Media

In the Spring of 2019, the Counseling services department started an Instagram account. We were made aware by other student services staff that students have reported that they usually get their information from social media. They find it to be the easiest way to consistently communicate information to students. Using this information, we found this as an alternative way to share Alcohol and other Drug Facts and safety tips with students in a non-lecture style format. This proved also a successful way to promote activities and events to students. On this account, we have been able to promote our counseling and AOD initiatives, including information about marijuana education, event promotion, and social norming campaigns. Between Fall 2023 and Spring 2025, 27 psychoeducational posts were posted on the Counseling Department's social media account.

Psychoeducational Programs on Campus

Mandated Educational Sessions

Students that violate the on-campus or off-campus AOD policy for a second offense or have a significant first offense are referred to the AOD Coordinator for mandated educational sessions. These sessions include a thorough assessment as well as education about how to make better decisions around alcohol and other drugs. Beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year, students that were referred to the AOD Coordinator for mandated sessions were required to complete community service hours as part of their requirements. This will be continued in upcoming academic years, along with the other educational assignments. Sessions utilize The Change Company's workbook for Alcohol, a psychoeducational packet on Marijuana and extensive alcohol assessment created by the Alcohol & Other Drug Coordinator.

What's in a Pour?

This was a new event in the spring 2015 semester in response to data collected that indicates that students drink more than they intend to. Therefore, it is unclear what constitutes one standard alcoholic beverage. This continues to be a misperception for students. Participants are encouraged to pour themselves a drink with actual liquor and wine bottles filled with water and juice. The contents were measured to show students how many standard drinks they consume at once. Students were then asked to practice pouring one standard drink to get a real sense of how that feels and looks compared to their typical pour. Blood alcohol content cards were distributed, and students were given tips on how to stay healthy and safe when choosing to drink. Since we have seen a positive response to this experiential program, we have incorporated it into many different areas of education. In the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 academic years, we have utilized this program at various events and trainings.

Grab n' Go Stations

In the 2024-2025 AY the AOD Coordinator and Counseling Department developed Psychoeducational Trifold Posters to place strategically around campus offering students AOD safety information, anxiety and stress management information, and counseling department resources. The posters stations include branded give away items, relaxation tools, and psychoeducational material. This program was developed to provide a presence on campus where students can interact with helpful AOD/Counseling resources.

Mocktails

In the spring of 2019, we were able to offer a new educational opportunity funded by the Prevention Project grant through Montgomery County Drug and Alcohol Services in conjunction with Counseling Services. This provided students with frozen Mocktail drinks and allowed students to learn about the dangers and risks of date rape drugs. Information was available and students were able to ask questions, and take single use breathalyzers, and cup condoms with them. In 24-25 AY this event was transformed to focus on easy to make mocktails from common ingredients found at events students attend. The event focused on normalizing abstaining from alcoholic drinks during social events while feeling less isolated by the choice not to drink. Students were provided with MA/GS information and were able to ask questions while also being provided with single use breathalyzers and cup condoms,

Decorate an Edible

In the spring of 2019, a new cannabis education event was put into motion after obtaining the CORE survey results and noticing a drastic increase in reports of cannabis use in university students. In the Spring of 2025, AOD collaborated with Prevention Education Services to provide a table that allowed students to decorate a cookie while learning about the safety of cannabis use, which highlighted the use of edibles and their complexities. The AOD Coordinator and Counseling staff then provided detailed information related to the use of cannabis and its dangers, side effects, and current legal ramifications. Educational material was also available.

Gambling Awareness:

The AOD Coordinator, in partnership with Prevention Education Services, began holding psychoeducational events on campus with the focus on Gambling Awareness, specifically the increase in online and app-based gambling. Two events were held in the spring of 2025 to address the increased use of gambling apps during highly viewed sporting events such as the Superbowl and March Madness. Students were provided with information surrounding the effects of gambling on the brain as well as the target methods taken by gambling companies to get them hooked on their apps.

Binge Drinking Awareness:

This was a new event as of Spring 2023. This event was developed in collaboration with the Bystander intervention video. This program utilized visual representations of various alcohol types and their corresponding “quantities consumed” during a binge drinking episode. Students were encouraged to match the type of alcohol to the quantity. In addition, they were given psychoeducation about binge drinking, “what is one drink?”, and how the body processes it. Information about alcohol overdoses, safe drinking strategies, and the Medical Amnesty and Good Samaritan policies were made available.

Vaping Education:

The Counseling Services office partnered with Prevention Education Services to provide a vaping psychoeducational event on campus. A representative of PES set up a table on campus and spoke with passerby students about vaping, the risks, safety, information about quitting, and to answer any questions.

Single use Breathalyzers:

Single-use breathalyzers were purchased via the Prevention grant in 2023-2024, and again in 2024-2025. They were made available across campus in popular student-facing locations: Library, Health & Wellness, Public Safety, Counseling Services, Student Activities, and Catherine's Cupboard. They were also made available at all Alcohol & Other Drug related activities and events.

Cup Condoms:

Cup condoms are single-use cup covers utilized to reduce the risk of drink tampering and sexual assault. These were purchased to utilize during our Mocktail event to promote safety surrounding date rape drugs and social drinking. Cup Condoms are made available at all alcohol and other drug related events.

Mandatory Alcohol 101+ for 21 & Over Residents

In the fall of 2016, a new Residence Hall Alcohol Policy was created that allowed those twenty-one and over to drink in their rooms on-campus. The restrictions and requirements are outlined in the policy. One requirement is that those that would like to take advantage of this new privilege would need to complete Alcohol 101+, an interactive alcohol education program. Students are invited to complete the program upon their 21st Birthday directly from Alcohol 101+ as well as from receiving an email from the AOD coordinator outlining what expectations for completion of the program and being granted permission to possess alcohol in the dorms. Students have the option to be excluded from the requirement if they express no intention of possessing alcohol. Once the program is complete, the AOD coordinator updates the roster of residential students who are approved to have alcohol in their dorm rooms.

Data Collection

Alcohol 101+: For the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 AY, Alcohol 101+ was utilized to collect all data related to the alcohol use of incoming freshmen. This was an interactive educational program that included data collection by self-report throughout the training. This was required to be completed by all incoming first-year students in the fall semester as part of their orientation process.

ECheckUp:

For the 23-24 AY, ECheckUp Cannabis was used to collect data that reflected patterns of marijuana usage amongst the student community. The program is a brief 30 minute online and interactive program that provides personalized feedback about cannabis use.

PIRE 2023 Montgomery County College Student Survey: In 2023-2024 AY the counseling department began using PIRE through grant funding to conduct student wide surveys, switching from the NCHA survey. The survey conducted of Gwynedd Mercy University students included topics related to Alcohol and other Drug use, Mental Health, and other relevant topics related to student well-being. Gwynedd Mercy University also participated in a Montgomery County wide survey of college students.

AUDIT/CUDIT: The AUDIT/CUDIT are two separate screening instruments that assess for Alcohol Use Disorder and Cannabis Use Disorder via self-report. The Counseling department began using this assessment in their intake process of all counseling students starting in 2021. It is also included in the Alcohol and Other Drug Coordinator's intake assessment for all mandated students. Furthermore, it is available for all students who engage in the Social Hosting Website.

Prevention Grant

In the 2023-2024 academic year, the counseling department wrote a grant proposal that was approved for \$27,480.43 in funding toward various efforts, including additional opportunities outlined below through the Montgomery County office of Drug and Alcohol and their college prevention initiative.

PIRE 2023 Montgomery County College Student Survey: We were able to obtain funding to complete a follow-up Survey for the Spring of 2024. This allowed us to obtain a well-rounded picture of students' physical and mental wellness.

- **Kognito:** We signed a one-year contract with Kognito At-Risk suite. This was a virtual Suicide Prevention training that was made available to all students and faculty/staff at the university. This training was interactive and provided the necessary information to effectively identify the warning signs of a mental health crisis or suicidal thinking of students from both peer and faculty/staff members prospective. This program received significant positive feedback and has been requested to be incorporated into the orientation process for the 2023-2024 academic year.
- **You@GMercyU:** We signed an 18-month contract with You@College. This is a confidential online wellness portal for students that provides psychoeducational articles, videos, and quizzes about various pillars of wellness. This portal also allows student access to emergency resources in the event of a mental health crisis. Students were made aware of this program in various ways and were encouraged to utilize this resource as a supplement and precursor to the use of the counseling department.
- **ECheckUp Cannabis:** A one-year contract was signed with ECheckUp to Go for Cannabis use. This program is a brief 30 minute online and interactive program that provides personalized feedback

about cannabis use. This feedback provided data that reflected patterns of marijuana usage amongst the student community.

- **Strategic Planning:** Included in the collaboration with Montgomery County, we were able to contract with PIRE to begin the process of developing a strategic plan for the Counseling and Alcohol & Other Drug services office to increase our ability to address the needs of the students and our campus community.
- **Single Use Breathalyzers:** Due to grant funding, we were able to purchase and provide single use breathalyzers for students. Single use breathalyzers are made available across campus in popular student facing locations: Library, Health & Wellness, Public Safety, Counseling Services, Student Activities, and Catherine's Cupboard. They were also made available at all alcohol & other drug-related activities and events.
- **Cup Condoms:** Cup condoms are single use cup covers utilized to reduce the risk of drink tampering and sexual assault. These were purchased to use during our Mocktail event to promote safety surrounding date rape drugs and social drinking. After that event, these were made available at all alcohol and other drug related events and activities.
- **Trauma Informed Yoga Sessions:** Monthly trauma informed yoga sessions were offered to students. These sessions were advertised frequently and utilized consistently by students. This program received positive feedback and continued in the 2023-2024 academic year.
- **Psychoeducational Resource Videos:** The counseling department utilized grant funding to produce videos providing guided instructions on mental health techniques and added to the website in a designated Resource Room. Techniques included: box breathing, scaling, grounding, thought stopping, cognitive reframing, progressive muscle relaxation, and body scans. These videos were created to make mental health techniques easily accessible to students and faculty.

In the 2024-2025 academic year, the county continued with their college initiative to give us increased access to resources, funds, and collaboration for the university. We wrote two grant proposals and were approved for an initial grant of \$4,481.94 and a second for \$6,821.08 in funding toward various efforts, and other opportunities as outlined below.

- **YOU at College:** Due to grant funding, we were able to continue to partner with YOU@College, which is an online integrative web portal that promotes mental, physical, academic, and substance use support and resources for our students.
- **Single use Breathalyzers:** Single use breathalyzers are made available across campus in popular student facing locations: Library, Health & Wellness, Public Safety, Counseling Services, Student Activities, and Catherine's Cupboard. They were also made available at all alcohol & other drug-related activities and events.
- **Cup Condoms:** Cup condoms are single use cup covers utilized to reduce the risk of drink tampering and sexual assault. These are made available at all alcohol and other drug related events and activities. Next year, they will continue to be made available in all appropriate student-facing locations.
- **Prevention Project Stake Holders Meetings:** The Alcohol and Other Drug Coordinator participated in the Montgomery County quarterly stakeholder meetings for all AOD coordinators and members of the counseling departments of the colleges and universities in

this county. These meetings allowed the county to provide necessary updates for alcohol & other drug resources in the county, as well as networking opportunities with other colleges on effective and non-effective programs/strategies on their campuses.

- **SOS:** SOS is a virtual Suicide Prevention training that was made available to all students and faculty/staff at the university. This training was interactive and provided the necessary information to effectively identify the warning signs of a mental health crisis or suicidal thinking of students.
- **Impairment Goggles:** Impairment Goggles are a series of different ski type goggles with lenses that represent different levels of inebriation from alcohol, marijuana, and hallucinations. These are used as an education tool to show students the visual effects of impairment and how it can impact their ability to do simple tasks such as walk a straight line, stack cups, or toss a ball. Thanks to grant funding, the Alcohol and other drug coordinator and counseling departments will be using these goggles during orientation events to provide AOD education to incoming students.
- **“What’s One Drink?” Magnets:** From feedback received during What’s in a Pour and Binge Drinking Awareness events, it became apparent that what constitutes a standard alcohol drink was not widely known. To add to our education items the AOD coordinator and counseling department created a card sized magnet to provide to students as well as place strategically around campus where students can quickly understand standard drink size information before engaging in drinking.

Goals & Achievements

2023-2024 AY Goals:

- Continued to work with Montgomery County’s opioid prevention grant, connected with other universities, and developed a stronger prevention program for our university.
- Targeted at-risk populations for potential increase in substance use by providing psychoeducation on alcohol safety, alcohol poisoning warning signs, and misperceptions surrounding cannabis. This required partnering with various departments across the university.

2023-2024: AY Achievements

- We partnered closely with athletics, residence life, student activities, and the social work departments. We continued to have another record low year for AOD violations.
- Obtained \$27,480.43 in grant funding from Montgomery County’s Prevention Project to fund: Trauma informed monthly yoga sessions, single use breathalyzers, mental health wellness kits, Kognito At risk training for Faculty/Staff and Students, You@Gwynedd Mercy University, Cup Condoms, and the Bystander Intervention Video.
- Actively participated in quarterly stakeholder meetings to network and connect with other AOD coordinators across the county.
- Completed eight psychoeducational events and shared 27 psychoeducational social media posts surrounding drugs and alcohol.
- Presented to five different campus groups about drug and alcohol safety, including: Resident Assistants, Orientation Leaders, Incoming Freshman, Fall and Spring Athletes.
- Identified and implemented a new Alcohol Education System for incoming first-year students. Implemented the use of Alcohol 101+, which had a 75% completion rate.

- Integrated the Bystander Intervention Program video, which included the development of a new Binge Drinking Psychoeducational Program, and a discussion with members of four athletics teams surrounding alcohol and other drugs.
- Conducted the PIRE College Student Survey Report, which yielded a participation rate of 15%.
- Had 30 resident students ages 21+ complete the required training to receive permission to consume alcohol on campus.

2024-2025 AY Goals:

- Continued to work with Montgomery County's prevention project to connect with other universities, obtain additional funds, and develop a stronger prevention program for our university.
- Continued to provide psychoeducational AOD events to students on campus covering alcohol and cannabis safety as well as introduce events around new emerging risk categories including gambling and energy drink consumption.
- Update branded design of AOD materials to align with counseling department messaging around wellness and garner more attention from students.

2024-2025 AY Achievements:

- Obtained \$11303.02 in grant funding from Montgomery County's Prevention Project to fund: single use breathalyzers, You@Gwynedd Mercy University, Cup Condoms, SOS, Impairment Goggles, and "What's in a Drink" Magnets
- The new AOD coordinator worked to introduce and coordinate with staff in other student facing departments including Residents Life, Students Activities, Athletics, etc.
- Actively participated in quarterly stakeholder meetings to network and connect with other AOD coordinators across the county.
- Completed eleven psychoeducational events and shared 27 psychoeducational social media posts surrounding drugs and alcohol.
- Continued the use of Alcohol 101+, which had a 36% completion rate
- Had 10 resident students ages 21+ complete the required training to receive permission to consume alcohol on campus.

2025-2026 AY Goals:

- Explore including Medical Amnesty and Good Samaritan policies for the university surrounding Cannabis.
- Develop a better understanding on how to address the increasing access students have to medical and recreational marijuana through state legalization in New Jersey.
- Participate in annual trainings with safety and security to provide updated information about alcohol and other drugs.
- Introduce more robust programming around new risks including gambling apps, micro-transactions in video games, new forms of tobacco use, and energy drink consumption.
- Administer the College Student Survey in the Fall of 2025 to get up to date campus AOD statistics.

- Maintain level of campus engagement through events while increasing digital content around AOD services and psychoeducation.
- Increase collaboration with campus stakeholders: Having more members of the community engaged in prevention continues to shape the positive culture surrounding drugs and alcohol on campus.

Strengths, Areas for Growth & Recommendations

Program Strengths:

- Diversity of program offerings: The AOD prevention program offers a number of programs, events, printed materials, and resources for students. This diversity of types of information available for students increases the likelihood that they will access this information. The various ways to consume this information allows students of all learning styles the opportunity to both access and understand this information. This increases the likelihood that students will make healthy decisions surrounding alcohol and other drugs.
- The Counseling Department utilized a transitional period during 2024-2025 AY to shift marketing and branding for Counseling and AOD services that focused on wellness and student empowerment. These messages have been woven into psychoeducational material, promotional material, and training events. So far feedback on these changes has been positively received by the student body and faculty/staff.
- Frequency and consistency of psychoeducational offerings: Alcohol and other drug safety information related to Medical Amnesty/Good Samaritan policies and social norming can be found across campus in paper form in academic and residential areas. Safety information can be found electronically in student's emails, social media, and digital boards weekly. Psychoeducational events on campus are offered monthly, and presentations are offered yearly to key student populations.
- Access to additional funding and support and relationship with county: Over the last two academic years, the AOD coordinator has been able to secure \$38,783.45 in funding to bolster the shared budget of the AOD coordinator and Counseling Office, which allowed these offices to better support student prevention and wellness. This also has allowed the AOD coordinator to fine tune the offerings of the department to student needs based on data and feedback.
- Focus on mental health that impacts substance use risk: Because the AOD coordinator is housed within the Counseling Services office, it has been helpful for the program to incorporate mental health into AOD prevention. Mental health and substance use are closely connected. Therefore, by addressing mental health needs, we are adding another layer of prevention for our students.
- Philosophy: The stance on alcohol use for the AOD prevention program is a strength of the program. The AOD program highlights safe use, informed decision making, and social norming, rather than abstinence. Abstinence has historically had a negative impact on student behavior.
- Data collection: The AOD program has various methods of data collection on student use of alcohol and other drugs. This allows for the program to shift focus based on student need year after year. This data collection also allows for the AOD coordinator to track

effectiveness of the program over time. Despite the annual increases in student reported use, there is a consistent decrease in student violations or AOD infractions.

Areas for Growth:

- Counseling need: The biggest area for growth and a barrier to providing more in-depth and comprehensive AOD programming and education is the increasing need of the counseling department. However, there are minimal staff to support the increasing need, which requires the AOD coordinator to offer additional counseling services.
- Engagement of students: A consistent barrier to most programs on campus is the lack of student engagement. The AOD office can offer significant education and resources to our students, but if they are not attending or engaging in the programs, resources, and information, then there is minimal impact. The department continues to find innovative ways to engage with students, including providing useful giveaway items that promote safe choices.
- Policy availability and consistency: Although the AOD and student conduct policies are available in various places across the university website and portal, it was made apparent that some of them are out of date during the review of the program. It is important that the AOD coordinator review the website at length and rectify any errors in policy postings.
- Imbalance: While the AOD program does a great job highlighting education to specific populations, there are various populations that have less access to the AOD coordinator and in-person presentations and trainings. The populations that are highlighted are: First year Students, Resident Assistants, Orientation Leaders, and Athletes. In theory, all students are exposed to the training and information in the First Year Experience. However, there are gaps. Students could benefit from repeated exposure and review, especially as they approach the legal drinking age.
- Faculty and staff: In this lengthy review of the AOD program, it was made apparent that there is minimal support, resources, and training available for faculty and staff. This means that faculty and staff may not have the necessary information to best support students and aid in the culture development surrounding alcohol and other drugs on campus. Furthermore, faculty and staff members who may be struggling with their own substance use issues do not have the necessary information they need to make healthy decisions.

Program Recommendations:

- 2024-2025 AY was last year grant funding will be available through Montgomery County's Prevention Project. This loss in funding has led to the discontinuation of programs such as You @ College and SOS as well as limited funds to purchase prevention items such as single use breathalyzers, cup condoms, impairment goggles, and other psychoeducational materials. The loss of grant funding will also impact our ability to conduct college surveys to gather helpful data about students' needs. It is imperative we find additional sources of funding for AOD programming.
- To offset the loss of grant funding, the Counseling Department prioritized increasing inventory of prevention resources and promotional items to cover upcoming academic year needs. We recommend an increase of \$500-\$1000 of the department budget per year to maintain program needs and meet prevention goals.

- After reviewing the policies and sanctions, it is suggested that the policies highlight Cannabis use more heavily. Data shows a continued increase of violations and use of Cannabis, and a decline in alcohol use and violations. Also, it is important to directly address the use of medical marijuana on campus, especially policies on campus to reduce the risk of error or complications.
- As mentioned previously, it is important to comb through the university website to identify areas where the AOD policies are posted. It should be confirmed that they are up-to-date, and out-of-date versions should be replaced. It is also important to include the AOD policies directly on the Athletic website.
- The director of the Public Safety department identified that cannabis has been the primary issue on campus the last two years, specifically in the residence halls. Psychoeducational efforts should be increased in this area.
- Much of the AOD psychoeducational efforts are geared towards students under the age of 21. A population that could benefit from more psychoeducation, or tailored information, is those who are 21 or older. This effort could focus on the places and ways in which they consume alcohol.
- It will be important to continue to identify growing trends in substance use amongst the college student population and continue to add to the program educational materials and resources that address these concerns, including Nicotine use, Gambling, and Caffeine consumption.
- First offenses: As a preventative measure in the past (post-COVID), there was a temporary rule that all first offense students were required to engage with the AOD coordinator. It is recommended that this requirement be revisited and discussed with AOD stakeholders to decide whether this should be made permanent in the future.
- Faculty and staff: As mentioned previously, there is minimal support and resources for faculty and staff. It is suggested to explore ways to better support faculty and staff in this area.

Conclusion

Overall, we are happy with the progress our department has made to the Alcohol and other Drug prevention programs for Gwynedd Mercy University. As mentioned previously, the program is comprehensive in its psychoeducational efforts with students. There have been increasing efforts with community leaders to positively impact the campus culture surrounding alcohol and other drugs. Quantitative feedback continues to show that our campus community typically practices safe alcohol use. We have found our school population does not fall prey to the media's portrayal of "college drinking behavior." It is also apparent that the student-facing-staff at the university are not only supportive of the program but empowering healthy decision-making and help-seeking behavior for students. Our continued focus is to highlight the importance of prioritizing wellness amongst the student population, and we feel our program strengths and recommendations reflect what we have achieved and where we can continue to improve on that goal. The Counseling Department's priority is to continue to offer quality and effective programming to address students' needs, particularly through securing funding for program development and implementation. We believe additional funding, addressing changing student needs, and innovative programing will continue to help our community thrive, reduce the

risk of alcohol and drug related incidents, and support students in remaining safe, well, and healthy.