

Selected Studies for Social Norms and School Demographics

Title: **Peer crowds in a commuter college sample: the relation between self-reported alcohol use and perceived peer crowd norms.**

Authors: [Sessa, F.M.](#)

Source: [J.Psychol.](#), 2007, 141, 3, 293-305

Abstract: The author studied peer crowds on a college commuter campus and examined the relation between self-reported alcohol use and perceived peer crowd norms for alcohol use. College students (N = 271) completed questionnaires to determine their peer crowd affiliation and frequency and amount of alcohol use. The author assessed perceived peer-crowd affiliation norms with a series of vignettes describing the typical student that would be associated with each peer crowd. Analyses revealed identifiable peer crowds among college students that represent different patterns of alcohol use both in self-reported alcohol use among students in a peer crowd and in the perceived norms for alcohol use in each peer crowd. The author described the relation between self-reported use and the perceived use by members of one's peer crowd.

Title: **Binge Drinking and Alcohol-Related Problems Among Community College Students: Implications for Prevention Policy**

Authors: [Sheffield, Felicia D.](#); [Darkes, Jack](#); [Del Boca, Frances K.](#)

Source: [Journal of American College Health](#), 2005, 54, 3, 137-141

Abstract: Binge drinking and alcohol-related problems among students at traditional 4-year universities have been well documented. However, little is known about the frequency of such behaviors and its consequences among community college students, who comprise roughly 44 % of all undergraduate students in the United States. The present study examined binge drinking and alcohol-related problems in 762 (61% female) ethnically diverse (65% Caucasian, 20% Hispanic, 9% African American) community college students (mean age = 26.23, SD = 7.81). Based on gender-specific criteria, 25% engaged in binge drinking. As compared to non-bingers and current abstainers, bingers had higher rates of drinking-related problems. The implications of these findings for research and for prevention/intervention programs are discussed.

Title: **The influence of perceived parenting on substance abuse during the transition to college: A comparison of male residential and commuter**

students

Authors: Sessa, F.M.

Source: Journal of College Student Development, 2005, 46, 1, 62-74

Abstract: Differences between residential and commuter first-year male college students were examined with respect to students' perceptions of the parent-child relationship and its influence on students' use of alcohol and marijuana. Fifty residential and 57 commuter students completed questionnaires to assess their perceptions of parenting and the frequency of their use of alcohol and marijuana. Differences were identified between the two samples of students with respect to perceived parenting and substance use, and the influence of that parenting. Perceived parental monitoring was related to less frequent alcohol and marijuana use among commuter students, but unrelated to use among residential students.

Title: **College student drinking: an examination of theoretical models of drinking tendencies in freshmen and upperclassmen.**

Authors: [Turrisi, R.](#); [Padilla, K.K.](#); [Wiersma, K.A.](#)

Source: [J.Stud.Alcohol](#), 2000, 61, 4, 598-602

Abstract: OBJECTIVE: The present research contrasted theoretical models of college student drinking tendencies (normative, social control, maturing out). METHOD: Three groups of students (N = 364; 62.1% female) from a moderately sized northwestern university were examined: traditional freshmen, nontraditional freshmen and upperclassmen. Participants completed measures assessing drinking tendencies, drinking consequences and drinking beliefs. RESULTS: Support for a given theoretical model was dependent upon which outcome variables were being examined (e.g., drinking tendencies vs drinking consequences). Nontraditional freshmen were similar to their traditional freshmen counterparts in the amount of alcohol they consumed but were more like upperclassmen in the experience of consequences of drinking alcohol. Examination of drinking beliefs yielded inconsistent model support. CONCLUSIONS: It appears that different types of college students drink for different reasons, suggesting a "one size fits all" intervention is less likely to be effective. The findings are discussed with respect to different interventions for changing drinking tendencies, drinking consequences and drinking beliefs, and the timing of those interventions.

Title: **College factors that influence drinking**

Authors: [Presley, C.A.](#); [Meilman, P.W.](#); [Leichliter, J.S.](#)

Source: [J.Stud.Alcohol Suppl.](#), 2002, 14, 82-90, United States

Abstract: OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this article is to examine the aspects of collegiate environments, rather than student characteristics that influence drinking. Unfortunately, the existing literature is scant on this topic. METHOD: A literature review of articles primarily published within the last 10 years, along

with some earlier "landmark" studies of collegiate drinking in the United States, was conducted to determine institutional factors that influence the consumption of alcohol. In addition, a demonstration analysis of Core Alcohol and Drug Survey research findings was conducted to further elucidate the issues. **RESULTS:** Several factors have been shown to relate to drinking: (1) organizational property variables of campuses, including affiliations (historically black institutions, women's institutions), presence of a Greek system, athletics and 2- or 4-year designation; (2) physical and behavioral property variables of campuses, including type of residence, institution size, location and quantity of heavy episodic drinking; and (3) campus community property variables, including pricing and availability and outlet density. Studies, however, tend to look at individual variables one at a time rather than in combination (multivariate analyses). Some new analyses, using Core Alcohol and Drug Survey data sets, are presented as examples of promising approaches to future research. **CONCLUSIONS:** Given the complexities of campus environments, it continues to be a challenge to the field to firmly establish the most compelling institutional and environmental factors relating to high-risk collegiate drinking.

Title: **Analysis of the Impact of a Social Norms Campaign on the Alcohol Use of Undergraduate Students and at Public, Urban University**

Authors: Wattenmaker, Amanda B.

Source: Master's Thesis, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2005

Abstract: *Purpose:* To conduct a secondary analysis of survey data collected at a large, urban university assessing for change in students' alcohol use perceptions and behaviors between 2002 and 2004. After the baseline data collection in 2002, the campus launched an intensive media intervention to normalize low-risk drinking. Simultaneously, the campus shifted from being a primarily commuter to primarily residential. *Methods:* This cross-sectional analysis used data collected from students in randomly selected undergraduate classes in February 2002 (n= 662) and 2004 (n=1334). The survey instrument used was the National College Health Assessment. Variables were categorized as demographic, alcohol perception, and alcohol related behavior. Because the media intervention targeted undergraduate students, decisions were made to limit analysis to traditional undergraduate students and to eliminate extreme self-reported drinking outliers by only including 18-24 year old undergraduates and those who reported drinking 25 or fewer drinks per sitting. Frequency tables were used to assess patterns. Independent samples t-tests and Pearson correlation coefficients were also calculated. *Results:* Consistent with the literature review, this study confirmed the existence of alcohol use misperceptions. The percent of the sample reporting accurate low-risk use perceptions increased. Despite correcting misperceptions, this study failed to document a decrease in high risk alcohol use and harm. Independent samples t-tests calculations revealed a statistically significant change in perception (t=6.49; p<.001) but not in consumption. A Pearson correlation coefficient

calculated on number of drinks and perception of drinking confirmed what has been found in other studies. Calculations reveal that drinking is positively correlated with perception of drinking (2002 c.428, p=.001; 2004 c.335, p=.001). *Conclusions:* This study adds to the body of literature that documents misperceptions are positively correlated with heavy drinking. The review of the literature also suggests that residential campuses have higher consumption rates than commuter campuses. In light of the 25% increase in residence hall space that occurred at this campus, one might have predicted that alcohol consumption should have increased. It is possible that no change was beneficial change. The planning and implementation phases of social norms campaigns on college and university campuses must take into account changes to the campus environment and changes in the student population demographics.

The following sites and resources may also be of use to you:

- 1) **Haines, Michael P.** “Limitations of the Social Influence Methodology and Applications in Different Settings.” *A Social Norms Approach to Preventing Binge Drinking at Colleges and Universities*. The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention. pp. 20-23 Retrieved from:
<http://www.socialnorms.org/pdf/socnormapproach.pdf>
This site addresses the use of social norms with commuter schools, schools without newspapers, religiously affiliated schools, and schools with very small enrollment. The article provides suggestions for adapting the social norm approach to a variety of campus environments with different population groups.
- 2) **Berkowitz, Alan D. 2004.** “Which Norms Are Salient?” *The Social Norms Approach: Theory, Research, and Annotated Bibliography* pp. 12-13 Retrieved from:
http://www.alanberkowitz.com/articles/social_norms.pdf