

# S tudent Life

## Research & Assessment

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

**Purpose** Information was collected from the OSU Student Drinking Survey in order to assess the extent to which Ohio State students drink as well as the attitudes and perceptions associated with drinking that these students hold.

**Sample** In Winter Quarter 2008, the online survey instrument was sent to 5000 randomly selected undergraduates who are over the age of 18 at the Ohio State Columbus campus. The overall response rate was 38.1% (total respondents equaled 1905), and all students participated in the survey via the web. The racial/ethnic composition of the sample is comparable to the student population.

### Major Findings

- **69%** of Ohio State students reported being “light” or “moderate” drinkers.
- **68%** of the students reported **drinking alcohol before age 17.**
- **75%** of students reported drinking on a Friday or Saturday night of a **typical week.**
- **74%** of students reported that they got drunk less than 7 nights during a **typical month** of the current academic year.
- **White students and off-campus students** were significantly more likely to report getting drunk in high school than their respective counterparts.
- Students averaged **8** drinks over **5** hours during the occasion when they drank the **most** during the previous three months.
- While **69%** of students who drink **consumed zero to two drinks per hour**, the average was **1.89** drinks per hour during peak drinking occasions.

## Undergraduate Student Drinking Survey

A partnership with the Student Wellness Center

Volume 1, Issue 1,  
August 2008

### Table of Contents

#### Purpose, Major Findings and Sample

pg 1

#### Introduction and Background

pg 1

#### Student Alcohol Consumption

pg 2-3

#### Perceptions of Alcohol Use

pg 4

#### High Risk Drinking Risk and Protective Behaviors

pg 5

#### University Initiatives

pg 6

pg 7-8

### Upcoming Reports from Student Life Research & Assessment

#### Undergraduate Student Drinking Survey

August 2008

#### Student Financial Wellness

September 2008

#### Student Climate for Diveristy

October 2008

#### Student Almanac

November 2008

#### First Generation Staff Survey

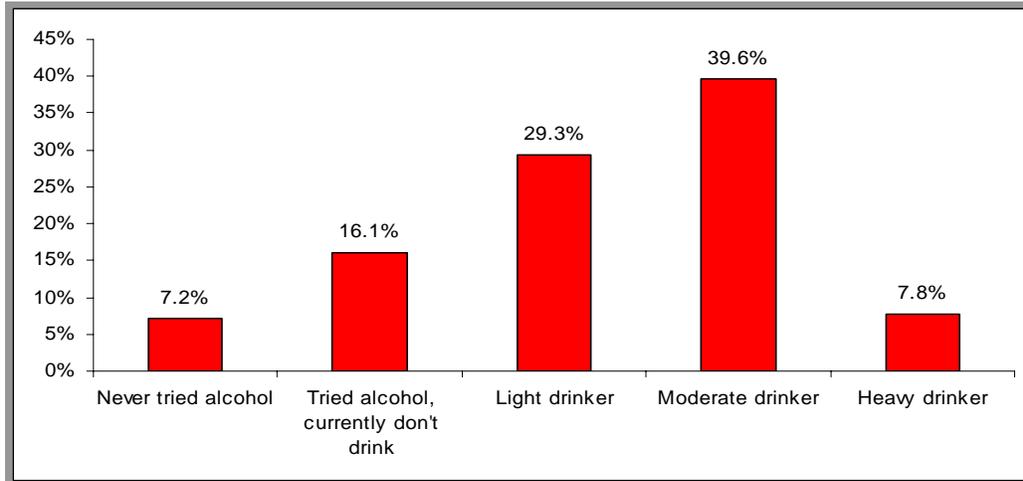
December 2008

# Findings

**Background** The OSU Student Drinking Survey was developed by Student Life Research and Assessment in collaboration with the Pennsylvania State University Office of Student Affairs Assessment and Research. Many offices at Ohio State target alcohol education and high risk drinking behaviors in their educational outreach to students. The goal of the survey is to better inform their practices and educational initiatives. The charts that follow represent OSU student’s behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions in regards to drinking alcohol in 2008. Specifically, these charts focus on student alcohol consumption and perceptions of alcohol usage.

## Student Alcohol Consumption

**Chart 1: Student’s Self-Reported Drinking Behavior (by percent)**



- Students involved in intramural sports and Greek organizations were represented more highly in the categories of “moderate” and “heavy” drinkers.

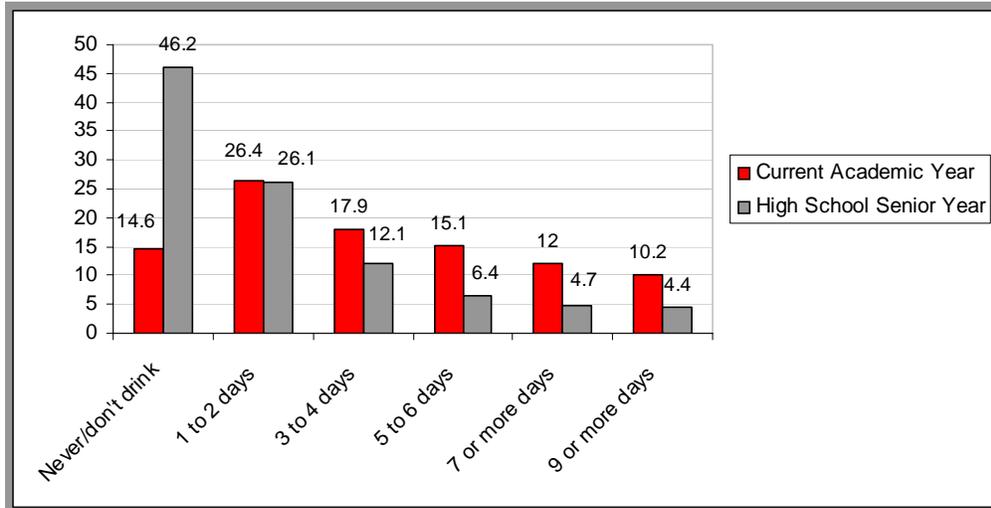
**Table 1: Nightly Alcohol Use During a Typical Week**

Night	Percent who are drinking	Average # of drinks	Average # of hours	Average # of Drinks per Hour
Wednesday	15%	.48	.34	1.32
Thursday	45.8%	2.11	1.49	1.40
Friday	79%	3.51	3.24	1.40
Saturday	80%	4.25	3.39	1.40

- Over 75% of the students reported drinking on Friday and Saturday nights of a typical week whereas 15% and 45.8% of students reported drinking on Wednesday and Thursday nights, respectively (see Table 1).

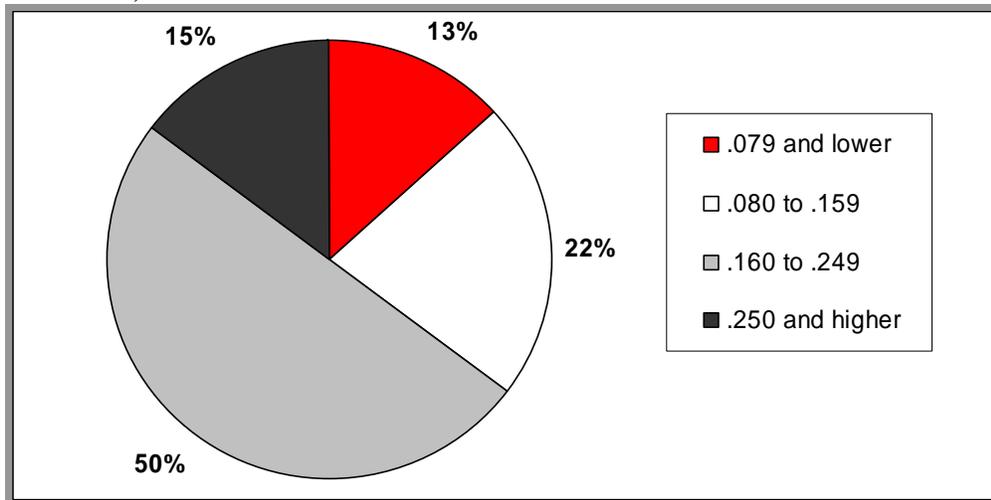
# Findings

**Chart 2: Number of Days Students Got Drunk During a Typical Month (by Percent)**



- During the current academic year, 22.2% of students indicated they get drunk on 7 or more days during a typical month, whereas 14.6% indicated they do not drink or do not get drunk, in comparison, 46.2% of students reported that they did not get drunk during a typical month of their senior year in high school.

**Chart 3: Blood Alcohol Content During Peak Drinking Experience<sup>1</sup> (calculated BAC for students who drink)**



- 15% of students reported consumption levels that equate to a BAC of .250 or higher during their peak drinking experience.
- 85% of students reported consumption levels during their peak drinking experience that equates to a BAC of .08 or higher, which is above the legal limit.<sup>2</sup>

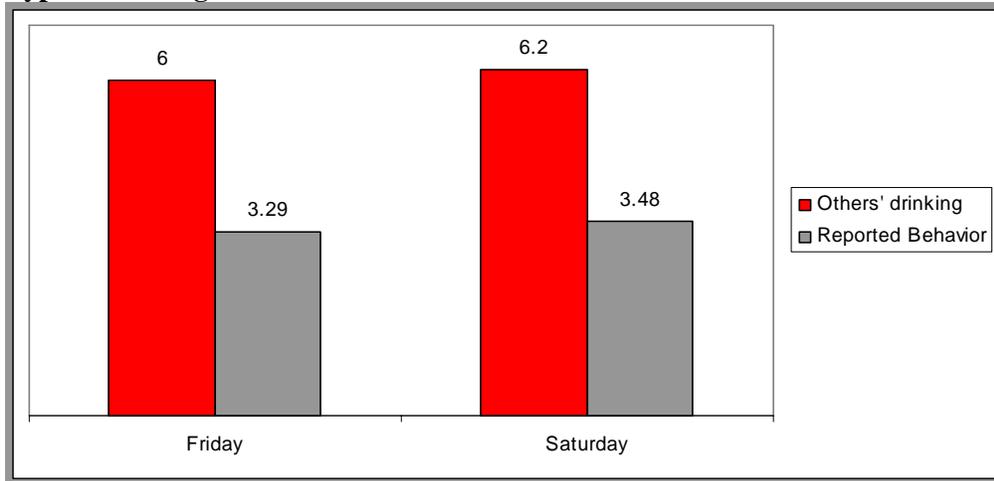
<sup>1</sup> For this question, students were asked to recall the time when they drank the most in the past three months. This reported behavior defines student's peak drinking experience.

<sup>2</sup> In the United States, any BAC that is above the value of .08 defined as illegal (source: [http://www.ohsinc.com/drunken\\_driving\\_laws\\_blood\\_breath%20alcohol\\_limits.CHART.htm](http://www.ohsinc.com/drunken_driving_laws_blood_breath%20alcohol_limits.CHART.htm))

# Findings

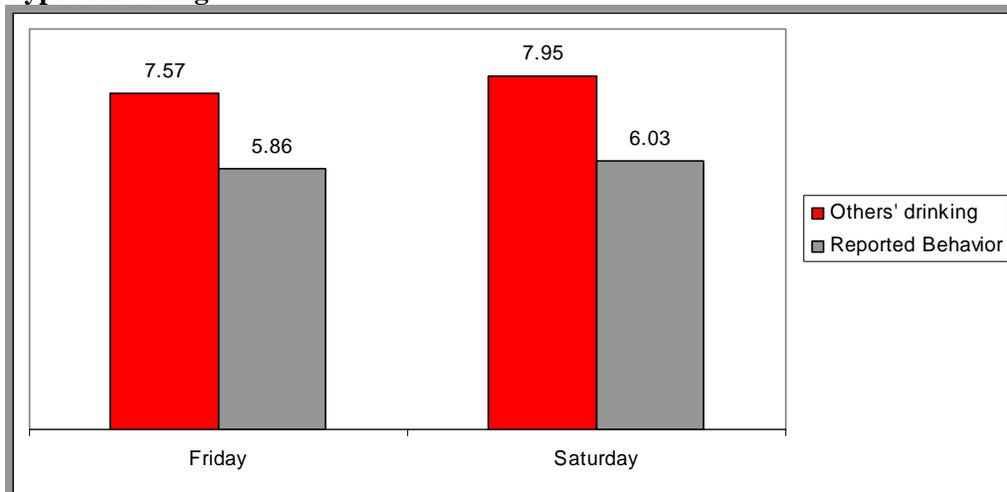
## Perceptions of Alcohol Use

**Chart 7: Women's Perception vs. Reported Behavior: Average Number of Drinks Consumed on a Typical Evening**



- Overall, women reported that they perceived others (of their same gender) were drinking at higher levels when compared to their self-reported drinking consumption.
- The perception women had regarding the drinking behavior of others when compared to their own drinking was almost twice as high for Friday and Saturday nights.

**Chart 8: Men's Perception vs. Reported Behavior: Average Number of Drinks Consumed on a Typical Evening**

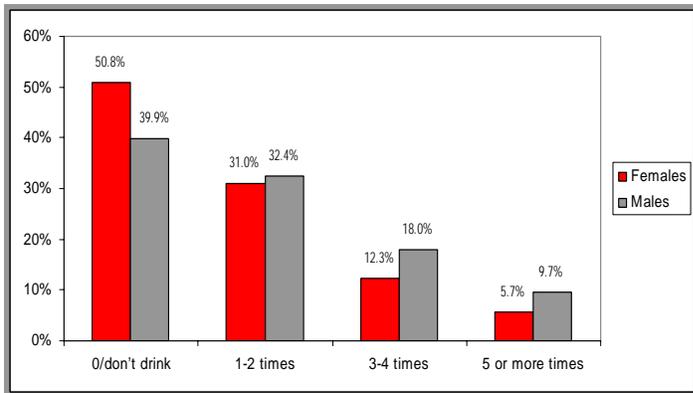


Overall, men also reported that they perceived others (of their same gender) were drinking at higher levels when compared to their self-reported drinking consumption, though the difference was not as pronounced when compared to the women's results.

# Findings

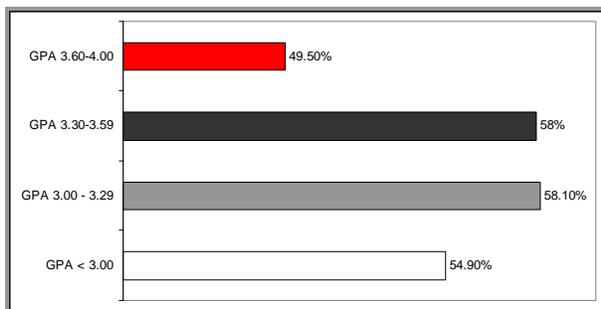
## High-Risk Drinking

**Chart 9: Number of Times Students Engaged in High-Risk Drinking During a Two-Week Period (by Percent and Gender)**

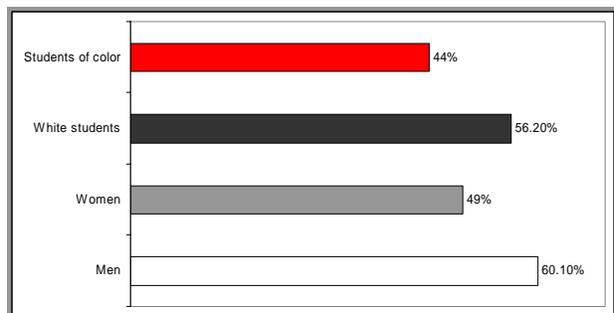


- Approximately 60.1% of male students and 49% of female students reported engaging in high-risk drinking behavior with 27.7% of males being classified as frequent high-risk drinkers and 18% of females being classified as high risk drinkers (see Chart 9).

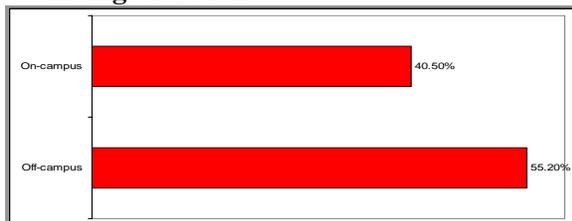
**Chart 10a: Percentage of High-Risk Drinkers vs. GPA**



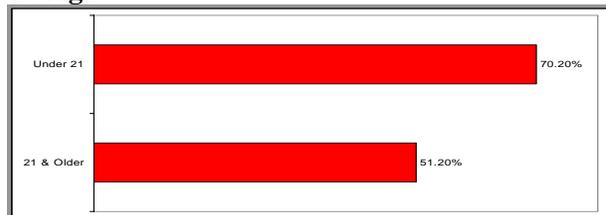
**Chart 10b: Percentage of High-Risk Drinkers vs. Gender and Ethnicity**



**Chart 10c: Percentage of High-Risk Drinkers vs. Living Situation**



**Chart 10d: Percentage of High-Risk Drinkers vs. Age**



- Evidence suggests that those students with higher GPA's (3.60-4.00) have lower levels of high-risk drinking, but, of the students who responded, students who have lower GPA's (3.00 and less) also have lower levels of high risk drinking compared to those in the midrange (see Chart 10a).
- As depicted above (see Chart 10b, c, d), men, white students, and students of non-legal drinking age reported significantly higher levels of high-risk drinking than did their respective counterparts. The proportion of off campus high risk drinkers and on-campus high risk drinkers was not significantly different.

## Findings

**Table 11: Risk Behaviors When Drinking Alcohol (of students who drink)<sup>3</sup>**

Behaviors	Percent “never” or “rarely”
Chug alcohol (i.e. keg stands, beer funnels)	67.4%
Choose a drink containing a higher alcohol concentration	41.2%
“Pre-game” (start drinking before going out)	34.7%
Do shots	33.3%
Play drinking games	28.5%

- In Table 11, data related to risk behaviors associated with alcohol consumption are provided. The percentages are for those students who indicated they “rarely” or “never” engage in these behaviors. Hence, more responsible drinking is associated with a higher percentage. The opposite is true for the average scores; the lower average is associated with more responsible drinking behavior.

**Table 12: Protective Behaviors When Drinking Alcohol (of students who drink)<sup>4</sup>**

Behaviors	Percent “usually” “sometimes” or “always”
Intentionally eat food or a meal before drinking	78.4%
Keep track of how many drinks you’ve had	68.4%
Set a personal limit of how many drinks you’ll have during a drinking occasion	52.3%
Pace your drinking to no more than one drinker per hour	38.9%
Alternate alcoholic drinks with water or other non-alcoholic beverages	40.9%
Think about your BAC in order to reduce risks associated with alcohol consumption	22.6%
Intentionally mix your drinks with less alcohol than “normal”	34.1%

- With the exceptions of students’ intentionally eating food before drinking (78.4% “usually”, “sometimes” or “always”), keeping track of how many drinks they have had (68.4%), and setting a personal limit of how many drinks they will have during a drinking occasion, students do not frequently practice protective behaviors that will reduce their risks related to alcohol (see Table 12).

<sup>3</sup> Scale: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = usually, 5 = always. The higher the average the more frequently students are engaging in drinking behaviors that will **increase** their risk

<sup>4</sup> Scale: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = usually, 5 = always. The higher the average the more frequently students are engaging in drinking behaviors that will **reduce** their risk

## *University Prevention and Education Efforts*

In 1997 the Ohio State University initiated a comprehensive alcohol prevention plan. The plan was designed to address campus culture pertaining to student alcohol and other drug use and change the campus environment that contributed to their use. While many campus offices address drug and alcohol issues, this report focuses on departments and organizations within Student Life including: The Student Wellness Center (SWC), Recreational Sports, University Housing, Ohio Union Activities Board (OUAB), Greek Life, and Counseling and Consultation Services.

## *The Student Wellness Center*

The Student Wellness Center offers programs and services to individuals and groups on campus, disseminates information, and works to develop a healthier and more caring campus. The Student Wellness Center staff are leaders in the statewide college initiative organized by the Ohio's Drug-Free Action Alliance. The following are SWC programs addressing Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) issues on the OSU campus.

- **First Year Success Series (FYSS):** Since Autumn 2001, the Student Wellness Center has coordinated a series of special lectures, seminars and events as part of the FYSS program. These sessions compliment a one credit hour survey course required of first-year students during the first quarter on the Columbus campus. Workshop titles include: *Reasons for Drinking?*, *Double Dare*, *Women and Alcohol*, *Kickin' Butts*, and *Choices About Alcohol*. Over 5,000 first year students participate in these discussions each fall.
- **BASICS:** The Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students (BASICS) program is a free program offered to students on a confidential basis. In 2007-2008, 110 students participated in BASICS. 90.7 percent of the BASICS participants agreed or strongly agreed that the sessions provided them with new or useful information about alcohol, alcohol use on campus, and/or alcohol use in general.
- **Late Night Programming:** Initiated in Autumn 2000 as part of the university's comprehensive prevention plan to address alcohol use, Late Night Programming offers alcohol-free events and activities. This and other Late Night events, sponsored by the Student Wellness Center, the Ohio Union Programming Board, and University Housing, have led to the result of a third of students reporting that they drink less than normal on the nights they attend these events.
- **Social Marketing Campaign:** The Student Wellness Center has an ongoing campaign to correct student misperceptions regarding norms for alcohol and other drug use at OSU, as most students overestimate the amount their peers are drinking. Partners of these campaigns include University Housing, Recreational Sports, and Greek Life.

## *University Housing*

- **Alcohol and Drug Related Policies:** Violation of University Housing policies result in an individual intervention, community intervention, or judicial hearing. Every student documented for a violation meets with a professional or graduate staff member. After three offenses, a meeting is required with the Director of Housing Education, usually resulting in parental notification. The motivational interviewing technique that is used in interventions has led to the result that no more than 30 out of approximately 9,000 students residing in University Housing violate the alcohol policy more than three times.
- **Alcohol and Drug Related Programs:** A substance-free community is available within Morrill Tower (SUB FREE); students on these floors interact with the Student Wellness Center to plan substance-free programs on campus. All first-year students have a scheduled conversation with their Resident Advisor during winter quarter that includes discussion of drug and alcohol use. 87.9 percent of students agreed that their RA informed them of the risks associated with alcohol use. Educational programming regarding drugs and alcohol, in addition to alternative programming, is provided, with hundreds of programs conducted each year for University Housing residents. A Wellness Week is conducted each autumn in which distributed information and bulletin boards focus on wellness issues, particularly alcohol use. Parents and students are surveyed every summer to assess their expectations regarding alcohol use.

## ***Recreational Sports***

In the fall of 2005, the U.S. Department of Education was awarded the OSU Student Wellness along with the Department of Recreational Sports a model grant to fund “Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds”. This project expanded current successful initiatives targeting first year students to sport club and intramural participants at OSU.

Additional Student Wellness Center funding has allowed for the partial continuation of this program.

- **CHOICES** (Cultivating Healthy Opportunities In College Environments): In conjunction with the Student Wellness Center, Athletics, and Greek Life, the CHOICES sessions at OSU consistently increase participants’ knowledge about alcohol as well an increase in the perception of the negative consequences of alcohol.

## ***Ohio Union Activities Board (OUAB)***

The Student Activity Fee enables the Ohio Union Activities Board to host activities for OSU students throughout the school year, including concerts, comedians, and celebrity speakers. OUAB’s Late Night Programming, though not a part of the university’s comprehensive alcohol prevention plan, hosts events designed to be fun, safe, and alcohol-free. Events include craft fairs, casino nights, movies, and special theme nights.

## ***Greek Life Task Force (GLTF)***

Formed in October 2000 to initiate reform within the Greek community, the GLTF surveyed Greek and non-Greek students in ’01 and ’04. Surveys were designed to assess the status of the Greek community prior to implementing policies and standards set forth by the GLTF, and to re-assess the community following implementation. Both were telephone surveys of a random sample of students. The following are some key findings from the survey.

- The average number of drinks per week reported by Greek students decreased from 9.6 in 2001 to 8.14 in 2004.
- The percentage of non-Greeks strongly agreeing that alcohol was a central part of the social life in the Greek community decreased significantly from 2001 (56.9%) to 2004 (46.7%).
- Binge drinking rates for Greeks (65.1%) remained substantially higher than that of non-Greeks(43.8%)
- Greek Life promotes the *CHOICES* and the *Party Smart* program for its members through the Student Wellness Center. This program targets students who have not yet developed alcohol related problems, but face a heightened risk. Over 500 students involved in Greek organizations participated in educational programming addressing the misuse of alcohol during the 2007-2008 school year.

## ***Counseling and Consultation Services (CCS)***

CCS provides formal assessment, individual and group treatment and prevention/education outreach for students with substance use problems. Assessment during the initial triage appointment, called an intake, determines the appropriate level of care for the problem. Students with problems that can be managed with weekly individual and/or group therapy may use the CCS services which are free and confidential for all students. Those needing partial or full hospitalization are referred to the community for AOD rehab. Occasionally students are referred for a mandated assessment with a report back to the referring authority (e.g. DUI, positive drug screen, Student Judicial). Students pay a fee for this comprehensive, three-session assessment. If they subsequently choose CCS treatment, it is free and confidential.