Poor Grades linked to Alcohol Abuse

In the largest survey ever of college drinking habits and their consequences, researchers from Southern Illinois University and the College of William and Mary found poor grades and alcohol assumption strongly correlated. The survey, "Alcohol and Drugs on American College Campuses: A Report to College Presidents," analyzed results collected on 78 college campuses, totaling 56,000 students, during the 1989-90 school year.

Researchers found that students who reported D and F grade point averages consumed an average of eleven drinks per week, while those who earned mostly A's consumed an average of three drinks per week.

Other findings included:
• Nearly 40% of students don't drink at all in an average week.
• 42% of students reported binge drinking in the two weeks prior to the survey.
• 36% reported driving while intoxicated.
• Traditional college students (under the age of 24) at schools with enrollments of less than 2,500 consumed about seven drinks per week, while students at schools of 20,000 or more averaged five drinks per week.

The survey also showed reason for hope. Other survey findings show that college alcohol and other drug use prevention programs are helping to decrease the quantity of alcohol and other drug use on university campuses. Alcohol consumption and binge drinking have declined at schools where federally-funded prevention and education programs were enacted.

(Data source: Johnson Institute Observer, Spring 1993)

Alcohol Content

(Data source: Modern Brewery Aages)

Data Disputes
Theory of Women's Drinking

Breaking a common myth about alcohol use and sexual habits among college students, men may be more likely than women to drink in order to overcome sexual inhibitions, according to a recent survey.

The survey of 491 freshman students in a human sexuality class at the University of New Orleans also indicated that men are more likely than women to use condoms and other forms of sexual protection after they have been drinking.

The results stunned the researchers who expected more women than men would drink to overcome sexual anxieties (such as fear of rejection). At the same time, researchers anticipated women as being more likely than men to use sexual protection.

No clear explanations about the results have been given, but Peter Anderson, University of New Orleans professor of health education and head of the study, offered one theory:

"Men have to overcome the fear of rejection when it comes to sex. In order to approach the fear of rejection, they may use alcohol more often than women." [And] "Women who drink may get more intoxicated than men and therefore may not remember to use protection when having sex."

Of 491 University of New Orleans freshmen surveyed:
• About 25% (72 male and 48 female) said they had drunk more than normal at least once to make it easier to have sex.
• 37% of those males said they regularly drank to make sex easier.
• 18% of those females said they regularly drank more to make sex easier.

About 60% of the males who drank for sex use protection after drinking compared to 33% of the females who drank for sex.
Marijuana

What is marijuana?
Marijuana (grass, reefer, pot, weed) is the common name for a drug made from the plant Cannabis sativa. The main mind-altering (psychoactive) ingredient in marijuana is THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol), but more than 420 other chemicals also are in the plant. The potency of the marijuana now available has increased more than 25% percent over the last decade.

Hashish, or hash, is made by taking the resin from leaves and flowers of the marijuana plant and pressing it into cakes or slabs. Hash is usually stronger than crude marijuana and may contain five to ten times as much THC. Hash oil may contain up to 50 percent THC.

Some of the immediate effects of smoking marijuana
Some of the immediate effects of smoking marijuana include a faster heartbeat and pulse rate, bloodshot eyes, and a dry mouth and throat. No scientific evidence indicates that marijuana improves hearing, eyesight, and skin sensitivity.

Studies of marijuana’s mental effects show that the drug can impair or reduce short-term memory, alter sense of time, and reduce ability to do things which require concentration, swift reactions, and coordination, such as driving a car or operating machinery.

Marijuana and driving ability
Driving experiments show that marijuana affects a wide range of skills needed for safe driving — thinking and reflexes are slowed, making it hard for drivers to respond to sudden, unexpected events. Also, a driver’s ability to “track” (stay in lane) through curves, to brake quickly, and to maintain speed and the proper distance between cars is affected. Research shows that these skills are impaired for at least 4 - 6 hours after smoking a single marijuana cigarette, long after the “high” is gone.

Long-term use of marijuana
Long-term regular users of marijuana may become psychologically dependent. They may have a hard time limiting their use, and they may need more of the drug to get the same effect.

Marijuana can cause an increase in heart rate by as much as 50 percent, depending of the amount of THC in the cigarette (joint).

Marijuana can also have a serious effect on reproduction. Some studies have shown that women who smoke marijuana during pregnancy may give birth to babies with defects similar to those seen in infants born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

Studies on men and women who use marijuana have shown that marijuana may influence levels of some hormones relating to sexuality. Women may have irregular menstrual cycles, and both men and women may have a temporary loss of fertility.

Scientists believe that marijuana can be especially harmful to the lungs because users often inhale the unfiltered smoke deeply and hold it in their lungs as long as possible. Therefore, the smoke is in contact with lung tissues for long periods of time, which irritates the lungs and damages the way they work. Marijuana smoke can cause bronchitis, emphysema and cancer. In addition, many marijuana users also smoke cigarettes; the combined effects of smoking these two substances creates an increased health risk. Studies suggest that it is likely that marijuana may cause cancer if used for a number of years.

New studies using animals also show that marijuana interferes with the body’s immune response to various infections (colds, flu and other viruses) and diseases.

When marijuana is smoked, THC, its active ingredient, is absorbed by most tissues and organs in the body; however, it is primarily found in fat tissues (brain, testes, ovaries). The body, in its attempt to rid itself of the foreign chemical, chemically transforms the THC into metabolites. Tests involving radioactively labeled THC have traced these metabolites in animals for up to a month.

(“Source: Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services)

Adverse reactions to marijuana
A common bad reaction to marijuana is “acute panic anxiety reaction.” People describe this reaction as an extreme fear of “losing control,” which causes panic. The symptoms usually disappear in few hours.

“Burnout” is a term first used by marijuana smokers themselves to describe the effect of prolonged use. People who smoke marijuana heavily over long periods of time can become dull, slow moving, and inattentive.
Marijuana

Smoke signals: How much is too much?

Just as with cigarettes, pot-related health problems can take years to develop. Life problems—involving friends, family, relationships, job and career goals—offer more immediate signs of whether pot is taking more out of you than you’re getting back. If you smoke pot, one way of telling if you’re a candidate for problems is by taking a look at how much you smoke now—and how likely you are to keep on smoking.

- Do you often smoke more than once a day?
- Do you smoke alone?
- Do you usually smoke before movies, concerts, or dates?
- Are you forgetful?
- Do you forget what you’re talking about, even when you haven’t smoked?
- Are friends and hobbies generally less interesting now than before you started smoking?
- Have you tried to quit but couldn’t?

If you answered “yes” to one or more questions, you may want to reassess how much of your life you’re spending with pot. Chances are it may be more than you really want to invest.

Marijuana’s effects on the body

Lung damage: Marijuana smoke can cause cancer, makes breathing more difficult and increases risk of getting lung infections.

Other problems:
- bloodshot eyes
- short-term memory loss
- dry mouth and throat

Heart damage: Marijuana smoke can cause increased heart rate, chest pains and chronic fatigue.

Marijuana is also addictive with some people and can lead to the use of harder drugs.

Just the Facts

FACT: One in four Americans has tried pot, and estimates range from 16 to 20 million frequent users.

FACT: By the eighth grade, 10 percent of youths have tried marijuana.

FACT: The signs of dependency are often too subtle to spot—especially in its early stages.

FACT: No matter what you’ve heard, marijuana is illegal (except in Alaska).

FACT: Some users bake pot into brownies or cookies to avoid lung irritation, but less THC is absorbed when eaten.

FACT: When marijuana is smoked, the amount of testosterone is often lowered; it also reduces the number of sperm produced by the body.

FACT: Children born to mothers who smoked marijuana during pregnancy may suffer from low birth weight, tremors, irritability, and impaired vision (Fetal Marijuana Syndrome).

FACT: Marijuana produces 50% more tar than tobacco.

FACT: Most effects of marijuana use—from changes in mood and perception to feelings of hunger and hilarity—peak in 30 minutes and disappear in 2–4 hours. However, some skills can be impaired 24 hours after smoking, even though users feel they are completely back to normal.

FACT: Managed medical use of marijuana can be effective in the care of glaucoma (an eye disease), and to minimize the unpleasant side-effects of chemotherapy for cancer patients (and drug-therapy for AIDS patients).

FACT: Even though some users report that marijuana enhances sex, it is not an aphrodisiac.

FACT: Research on marijuana and chromosome damage has been minimal and inconclusive.
Do you think he could remember all those addresses if he drank and drove?

Please don't drink and drive.

Facts About:
BACCHUS
(Boost Alcohol Consciousness Concerning the Health of University

Students) is a new student organization on campus which promotes responsibility in the consumption of alcoholic beverages. This peer organization network does not condone nor condemn college students' use of alcohol, but instead presents the facts on alcohol-related issues and encourages alternative activities to one that focus on alcoholic beverages. (*For more information, contact Roxanne Ayotte at 532-6927)

Other Campus Resources

University Counseling Services
Lafene Health Center-2nd floor
(Sherry Benton) 532-6927

Al-Anon Meeting
Lafene Health Center-Room 21
532-6927 (Roxanne)
Thursdays, Noon-1 p.m.

Alcoholics Anonymous
Open Noon Meeting
(M-F, Noon-1 p.m.)
Ecumenical Campus Ministry
1021 Denison

Lafene Health Center
532-6544