



5-12-2012

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Thesis title

The Effect of Preconceived

Expectation of Alcohol Use and College Life on
Freshmen's Drinking Behavior

Intended date of commencement

May 12th, 2012

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11 July 2012

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Director, Honors Program

For Honors Program use:

Level of Honors conferred: University

Departmental

Criminology and Psychology with
Highest Honors

BUTLER UNIVERSITY

The Effect of Preconceived Expectations of Alcohol Use and College Life on Freshmen's Drinking Behaviors

Trisha Wilcox

4/17/2012

The Effect of Preconceived Expectations of Alcohol Use and College Life on Freshmen's Drinking Behaviors

Drinking on college campuses is a primary concern of university staff, administration, law enforcement, and parents. In a study that evaluated the normative perceptions about college life and alcohol use with 147 college freshmen, normative perceptions of the college experience were evaluated with their relationship to drinking behavior. Researchers surveyed the residential, incoming freshmen class about their perceptions their first night on campus and followed up with these students on their behaviors after a full semester on campus. Researchers aimed to pinpoint a relationship between the expected student role, the typical student role, and the campus climate. It was hypothesized that each of the aforementioned measures would be significant predictors of drinking behaviors in students. While both the expected student role and typical student role were found to be significant predictors, the campus climate had seemingly no effect. The data suggests that overall campus impressions are not as significant to the student in terms of their behaviors, and any attempt to establish programs on drinking behaviors should be centered on specific and direct norms that are related to the students.

Drinking behaviors of college students are a primary concern for parents, university administration, law enforcement, and social researchers, as alcohol consumption is often coupled with an element of risk. High-risk alcohol consumption is generally understood to be binge drinking, and investigating the reasons why and the contexts in which this behavior occurs is critical to generating policy to manage the issue. Many students engage in this risky behavior within their first year of college, and some even within the first few weeks. What is it about the first year of college that causes students to engage in these actions even when they recognize that it is unlawful? Social norms are powerful drivers of behavior and there are a number of norms governing the college experience. If incoming freshman maintain the perceptions that alcohol use and risky consumption is normative on the college campus and is both typical and expected of college students, this may lead to their own participation in drinking behaviors.

Literature Review

In our modern society, drinking behavior on college campuses is highlighted and reinforced through pop culture. Any television show centered on college life is not complete without the traditional party scene and hundreds of red plastic cups. Norms are powerful social influences that often correlate with behavior. These social drivers can have a myriad of effects on those individuals that experience them. As the drinking culture is concerned, the assumption of alcohol use and abuse may be a driver in the participation in these behaviors. There is a body of literature that examines college drinking norms and the effects of such norms on student drinking behavior. There are three aspects to this particular study that are examined for the relationship between perceptions and behaviors: perceptions of alcohol use on campus, alcohol use as normative behavior on college campuses; and alcohol use as part of the college student role.

Previous research suggests that upwards of 90 percent of college students consume alcohol. The reality of the culture is that underage drinking is rampant, and students hold perceptions of the college lifestyle in regards to these behaviors. Perceptions of other student's drinking behaviors and drinking norms on campuses are often exaggerated and students tend to overestimate their peer's levels of consumption (Baer, Stacey, & Lamier 1991). Further, individuals that hold these perceptions are nearly seven times more likely to engage in the over-consumption of alcohol (Arbour-Nicitopoulos et al. 2010). The norms and ideas about typical behavior on college campuses and what it means to be a college student correlates with the role a student will emulate. If the student internalizes and identifies with these norms, this is a critical step in determining if a student will enact the behaviors in line with the social norm. Internalizing norms leads to the role expectations that can provoke guilt and dissonance when an individual does not act in accordance with them (Campbell 1964). Maintaining the idea that

college students are supposed to drink as part of the student role is reminiscent of this idea; if I am supposed to drink in college and I don't, what role do I have in the social status that I place great value on?

There have been many attempts to define the various types of norms and the parts of human behavior and cognition that they affect. Norms that have positive or negative effects to those they are prescribed to have been formerly known as proscriptive and prescriptive norms - their effects indicated respectively (Larsen & Abu-Laban 1968). In assessing individual's behaviors, norms have been more recently divided into descriptive and injunctive norms. Descriptive norms are the perception of what is commonly done in a situation and injunctive norms are the perceptions of what is commonly approved of in a situation (Schultz et. al 2007). The two are interrelated when it comes to drinking norms; drinking behavior and approval norms are often overinflated and create misconceptions of the culture (Borsari & Carey 2003). Students that envision drinking behaviors as normative and accepted will be much more likely to engage in them.

Other studies that have examined social norms have aimed to provide a social intervention to reduce binge drinking on college campuses. In general, other studies have found that while social normative campaigns while many of these studies slightly decrease the amount of individual drinking on campus, they rarely reduce the overall perception of the amount that other students are drinking on campus (Polonec, Major and Atwood 2006). Due to the fact that research seems to agree that interventions on campuses are minimally helpful at best, the call for a deeper understanding of where these norms come from and how to break them down is crucial (Carter and Kahnweiler 2000). These overall findings have aided in the internalization of the misperceptions of drinking norms on campus.

The college student identity is something that develops as an individual encounters different aspects of the university lifestyle. If the university itself is known for being a party school, the institution may be priming incoming students with the expectation to consume alcohol. In order to investigate this, studying the university's context and norms concerning alcohol becomes crucial. Identifying with the university is an important part of being a student, and ultimately developing the college student role identity. Some students develop differently within the university context and choose not to participate in the consumption of alcohol and abstain. This would suggest that there is something fundamentally different between those that choose to consume alcohol in a high-risk way and those that do not. The perceptions of the general expectations concerning alcohol at the university become vital. These perceptions are subjective to the individual, and if the students that are drinking in unsafe ways view the university as associated with risky drinking norms, this may influence their participation in this behavior.

Recently, several studies have examined the use of alcohol as it relates to the student role and have found that students often view drinking as a normative or expected part of being a student. Consistent with normative studies, in a study conducted by Crawford and Novak (2010), perceived drinking norms were studied with students 18-20 years old. The students that viewed alcohol consumption as an integral part of the college experience were much more likely to engage in heavy consumption activities (Crawford and Novak 2010). Osberg et al (2011) developed the College Life Alcohol Salience Scale (CLASS) to assess the extent that students identify with the drinking culture. This scale found that "the college alcohol beliefs construct" explained "significant additional variance in typical drinking and drinking consequences" (p. 335). Uncovering the extent that students identify with these norms is the first step in

uncovering the causes of the behavior. These findings line up with research conducted with students that did not identify as participants in the drinking culture. In fact, “a negative attitude toward alcohol use was the strongest predictor of being an abstainer. More than 80% of students who agreed that drinking is never a good thing to do were abstainers” (Huang et al. 2008). The college identity can involve how a student identifies their role with alcohol use. Therefore, students that abstain are fundamentally different than those that choose to drink. This idea takes the role of perceptions even further than other students and the university setting; the expected student role is something a student feels compelled to fulfill. If students maintain these perceptions about alcohol consumption, it may increase their likelihood in participating in the behavior. Developing a well-rounded definition of the perceptions that relate to drinking behaviors is critical for this research and defining the college student as they relate to alcohol.

Participation in high risk drinking, often defined as binge drinking, has been concisely defined and generally accepted as “men who consume five drinks (50 g) or more or women who consume four drinks (40 g) or more in one sitting” (Flegel, MacDonald & Hébert, 2011). However, high frequency and quantity of alcohol consumption can be dangerous to an individual even if they don't fall in the spectrum of this definition. Drinking with great frequency or in high volume can undermine judgment, decision making, and the ability to control one's own actions. However, while this information is seemingly common knowledge, drinking behaviors are commonplace in university settings and it may be the fact that these behaviors are normative and is leading to such behavior. If “everyone is doing it,” the threat of these consequences diminishes greatly. The goal of this study will be to examine the link between incoming students' perceptions and expectations of college life as they relate to the use of alcohol and the effect that these perceptions have on their own drinking behavior.

Thesis Objectives

This study aims to pinpoint the relationship between the early perceptions of college alcohol use that first-year students hold when they first arrive on campus and their later participation in high-risk alcohol consumption. Instead of simply investigating the perceptions, this study will attempt to establish a causal relationship between perceptions and behaviors. A secondary objective of this research will be to examine the independent impact of each of the three aforementioned aspects of alcohol norms on student drinking. A deeper understanding of these perceptions and their link to behaviors could have significant impacts on policy and education for incoming students on campus.

The findings of this research could have a significant impact on the approach to high-risk drinking that university administration and university law enforcement take with students. If the incoming perceptions of high-risk behaviors are identified as an integral part of the student role, implications for combating these perceptions would be significantly different than the current approaches of talking about “responsible drinking” and other programs to deter these behaviors after students arrive on campus. On the other hand, if the perceptions and actual behaviors do not match up, this may indicate a change in the perceived student role while becoming integrated into the university lifestyle. Combating these behaviors is critical in promoting positive health and safer practices with this social behavior.

There are two hypotheses for this particular research study. First, it is hypothesized that incoming students who believe that consuming alcohol is part of the college experience and the student role, will be significantly more likely to participate in those behaviors than students that do not view alcohol as part of university life. Second, students who perceive alcohol use a normative on the school’s campus will be more likely to engage in high risk drinking behaviors.

Method

Research Design

All first year students living on campus were asked to participate in the initial survey. The survey was presented at the first hall meeting of the year held within the first two days of arrival on campus. Resident Assistants (RA) conduct these meetings with their respective hall units and due to the number of units to access, RAs were selected to distribute the survey. In order to establish some control, all residents were given the survey at the end of the floor meetings (all of which occurred at the same time). The RA staff was trained on administering the survey and was given a script to assist them and create uniformity in the process. Respondents were informed that there was minimal to no risk involved with participation in this study. Due to potential concerns of the legality of the survey topic, participants were assured that all information gathered would remain completely anonymous. Due to the mandatory nature of the floor meeting, it was also stressed that participation in the project was entirely voluntary and that respondents could opt out of participating at any time. Participants were instructed to deposit their completed survey into an unmarked box with a slot cut into the top in order to highlight the anonymity of the process. The position of the RA is one that requires the enforcement of campus policies regarding alcohol, therefore, the drop boxes aided in removing any kind of bias the RA would otherwise introduce. A total of 569 students participated in the initial survey for a response rate of 66%.

The follow-up questionnaire was administered at the beginning of the second semester. The original sampling frame was utilized again as a second attempt at a census of students. Students were contacted through their Resident Assistant with information reminding them of

their previous involvement in the study and asking for follow-up participation. The e-mail contained a link to the online survey to be completed over approximately two weeks' time. The survey was administered online due to the lack of a uniform setting available to distribute the surveys. Given the amount of time spent on technology each day, the online assessment provided students with convenience. The online survey highlighted informed consent, minimal risk, and the anonymity of the study. Respondents were assured that any information provided would remain completely anonymous.

In order to match the data from the initial and follow-up surveys, a section containing anonymous identifiers appeared at the beginning of each survey. These identifiers asked students to fill in three identifiers: first three letters of the mother's maiden name, first three letters of the respondent's middle name, and the first three letters of the birth month. These identifiers were chosen because of their unique nature, but were also selected because the university does not collect all of the information necessary to match the identifier to a student, ensuring anonymity.

Participants

The final sample consisted of 147 college freshmen aged 18-20 years old living on campus. Participants were predominantly female (68.3%) and Caucasian (94.6%). (*See Table 1*).

Measures

Drinking Behavior: In order to measure the dependent variable, a drinking index was created. Drinking behavior was measured in the second survey, after participants' first semester on campus. The index consisted of three questions to measure both quantity and frequency of drinking in order to identify problem drinking behaviors. The questions consisted of: the average number of drinks in a week, the number of times intoxicated in the past 30 days, and how many drinks are usually consumed at one sitting (see appendix). Nondrinkers were assigned zeroes on

each of the individual questions. To standardize the measure, the z-score of each question was calculated and combined to create the index. The questions reliably measure the same concept with a reported Cronbach's alpha of (.893). High scores on the scale were indicative of problem drinking habits.

Beliefs about Alcohol and the College Experience: The Beliefs about College Expectations index (BACE) was used to measure the perceptions students hold about their expected behavior in college as it relates to drinking. The questions that made up this index were measured on a traditional Likert scale, indicated to what degree students believed drinking was an integral part of their expected student role. For example, students were provided statements such as "college is the best time in our life for drinking," "alcohol excuses bad behavior," and "college students are entitled to drink irresponsibly." They were then asked to what degree they agreed or disagreed with each statement (see appendix). The Cronbach's alpha for this index was (.930). The higher the score indicated by an individual, the more strongly they hold the belief that drinking is an expected part of the student role.

Beliefs about Alcohol and the Typical Student: The next measure used to test the effect on drinking behaviors was the Typical Student Index. This index consisted of questions that were constructed to parallel the drinking index as it relates to the typical Butler student. The questions are centered on frequency and quantity of consumption and have a reported Cronbach's alpha of (.807). The higher the scores on this index, the more the student perceived others on campus to be drinking in larger quantities. The questions were used to measure the belief that if "everyone is doing it" others will be more likely to enact these behaviors as well.

Beliefs about Alcohol and the Campus Climate: The final measure that was constructed to examine its effects on drinking behavior is the Campus Climate Index. This measurement, not

yet utilized by other research in the field, asked participants questions on the overall campus culture and how it relates to drinking behaviors. The questions asked students, again on a traditional Likert scale, about the social atmosphere of campus, the normality of drinking on campus, and the ease in which a person could obtain alcohol on campus. The index reliably measured campus climate with a reported, relatively strong, Cronbach's alpha of (.785). All questions in the index are provided in the appendix.

Control Variables: Greek participation, previous drinking in high school and the amount that friends drink has been previously found to be directly correlated with the amount that an individual will drink. Previous drinking behavior is a strong indicator because the student may label the behavior differently than a nondrinker. While a nondrinker may see the act as deviant, a student that has previously consumed alcohol might be more comfortable continuing the behavior. Fried drinking is also important to the normative nature of the study; peer groups are highly influential and often reflect behaviors shared within the network. Finally, Greek participation has been stereotypically and normatively related to drinking on college campuses in the media and entertainment; these perceptions created through pop culture may act as indicators of drinking behavior that should be held constant in order to examine the effects of the measures on drinking behaviors.

Results

Descriptive

The study, as indicated in *Table 1*, contained a sample with approximately 68% female, freshmen students. Three-quarters of the sample were Greek participants and just under half, (44%) of students in the sample had previous drinking experience with friends that drank moderate amounts.

<i>Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (n=147)</i>	Mean	Std. Dev.	Range
Female	.68	.47	0-1
Greek Participant	.75	.43	0-1
Drank in High School	.44	.50	0-1
Friends Drink A lot	2.35	.92	1-5
BACE Index	29.17	7.25	15 - 46
Typical Student Index (Standardized)	.0092	2.55	-4.81 - 16.71
Campus Climate Index	12.62	2.91	6-20
Drinking Index (Standardized)	.50	2.71	-3.01 - 8.37

Bivariate Correlations

Examining which of these different aspects of norms share relationships is an important part of the study as well. As can be seen in Table 2, the Typical Student Index and the BACE Index are positively, but weakly correlated. These two indexes are measuring related, but fundamentally different aspects of norms with students. If they were measuring the same thing, they would be much more highly correlated. This increases the reliability in these measures as well.

<i>Table 2</i>		Correlations		
		Campus Climate Index	Typical Student Index	BACE Index
Campus Climate Index	Pearson	1	-.027	-.006
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.762	.945
	N	138	128	130
Typical Student Index	Pearson	-.027	1	.269**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.762		.002
	N	128	135	134
BACE Index	Pearson	-.006	.269**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.945	.002	
	N	130	134	138

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In general, the campus climate seemed to generate a supportive atmosphere for alcohol consumption with students that had the intentions of consuming alcohol on campus. Students that held the perception that drinking was a common activity at Butler University indicated a significant correlation for both the intention to drink ($r = .462$) and the campus climate ($r = .820$) as indicated in *Table 3*.

Table 3

Correlations

		Campus Climate Index	Drink Behavior Index	I intend to drink alcohol during college	Drinking is a common activity at butler
Campus Climate Index	Pearson	1	-.031	.462**	.820**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.721	.000	.000
	N	138	138	133	138
Drink Behavior Index	Pearson	-.031	1	-.106	-.027
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.721		.225	.751
	N	138	147	133	139
I intend to drink alcohol during college	Pearson	.462**	-.106	1	.466**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.225		.000
	N	133	133	133	133
Drinking is a common activity at butler	Pearson	.820**	-.027	.466**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.751	.000	
	N	138	139	133	139

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Campus climate perceptions were very strongly, positively correlated with the intentions to consume alcohol, supporting the notion that the general climate does carry an effect with students. However, it is important to note that these effects are only present with those students that intend to drink and they were not correlated with drinking behavior. Therefore, while most of the incoming students do not envision the campus as one that supports a drinking culture

significantly, it appears that those that do hold those perceptions may select into situations to find affirming evidence through consumption

Multivariate Analyses

. In order to analyze the effects of the independent measures on the dependent variable, a multivariate, hierarchical regression was utilized. This additive regression style allowed for the addition of each variable as a different model to examine the effects and the change in R-squared. As each model is added to the regression, the R-Squared value changes and the amount of variance the variables accounts for alters. In the first model of the regression, the controlled descriptive variables of gender, Greek intentions, previous drinking behavior, and friend drinking behavior were controlled with the addition of the BACE scale variable. In the second model, the Typical Student Index was added into the regression, followed by a third model that incorporated the Campus Climate measurement. The changes in R-squared are critical in the understanding of how much each of the variables is affecting the dependent measure.

In the first model, none of the controlled measures of gender, Greek intentions, previous drinking, or friend drinking had an effect on drinking behaviors after a semester in college. However, the BACE scale did produce a significant result ($p < .001$) and was a predictor of drinking behaviors. These results show that the more students held the belief that alcohol was a part of the college student role; the more likely they were to drink in higher frequency and quantity. The descriptive controls and the BACE scale accounted for approximately 15% of the variance in drinking behaviors on campus (*Adjusted R-squared* = .149). When Typical Student index is added to the regression and includes the Typical Student index, it is also found to be a significant predictor of drinking behaviors ($p < .001$) with the same effect as the BACE index; the more students bought into the belief that the typical student consumes alcohol at high rates, the

more likely they were to do so as well. There was a change in the Adjusted R-Squared values of (.087), indicating an almost 9% increase in the variance accounted for by the independent measures on drinking behavior. This may be due to the slight correlation between the indexes, but not enough to overlap the two too much. It demonstrates that they are measuring different aspects of norms on campus (Refer to *Table 2*). Both the BACE and Typical Student index, combined with the descriptive controls account for approximately 24% of the variance in drinking behavior. In the third and final model, the Campus Climate measure was added to the regression but was not found to be a significant predictor of drinking behavior. There was a decrease in the variance accounted for in the regression and when all three scales were put in the regression, along with the controlled predictors, the total variance accounted for by the variables was approximately 23% (*Adjusted R-Squared* = .232). The Campus Climate measure may be measuring parts of drinking behavior that is already accounted for in another one of the independent measures. This could cause the decrease in the R-Squared values, as the measure is already represented in the data.

Table 4
Estimated Effects of Perceived Norms, BACE index, and Campus Climate on Alcohol Use
(n=147)

	b	Beta	b	Beta	b	Beta	b	Beta
Constant	1.40		-1.78		-1.11		-1.58	
Female	-.43	-.10	-.34	-.08	.09	.02	.17	.04
Greek Intentions	-.06	-.01	-.18	-.04	-.34	-.07	-.32	-.07
Drink HS	-.19	-.05	-.03	-.01	-.16	-.04	-.21	-.05
Friend Drink HS	-.28	-.13	-.27	-.12	-.33	-.14	-.36	-.16
BACE			.11***	.38	.09***	.30	.08***	.29
Typical Student					.27***	.33	.28***	.34
Campus Climate							.04	.06
R-Square	.007		.149		.236		.232	
Change R-Square			.142		.087		-.004	

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Discussion

The data in the study provides support for the first hypothesis in the study; the perceptions of what it means to be a college student and a typical student at the university were significant predictors of drinking behaviors. College freshmen are uprooted from home and their living situations and find themselves implanted in an entirely different culture that often has a very different set of values and norms. The pull to be a part of the culture and to fit in is a

powerful social driver, and if the norms in the culture are constructed to support drinking on campus, there is a strong social force to enact those behaviors. Furthermore, the expectations to partake in these roles become even more salient as students are immersed on campus.

The second hypothesis in this study predicted that the campus climate would act as a significant predictor of drinking behavior for incoming freshmen. If the students viewed the campus as one that supported a drinking culture, they would be more likely to participate in high-risk drinking behaviors. However, the data did not provide confirming evidence for this idea. There is was no indicator that the campus climate played a role in student drinking. There are a few reasons for the lack of effect in this variable on drinking behavior. First, the final sample utilized in the study may not accurately reflect the population. The self-selected sample consisted of predominantly female, nondrinkers. In addition, variables that have been found to be significant predictors of drinking behaviors in other research were not found to be significant in this research. Gender, previous drinking behavior, and friend drinking were not significant predictors of drinking in college, which is extremely unusual. The issues with the sample mean that it cannot be generalized to a total sampling frame of freshmen college students living on campus very easily.

Another explanation as to why the Campus Climate Index was not a significant predictor of drinking behaviors could be the fact that the norms measured in the index were too external to the student. In the BACE and Typical Student measures, there were specific and situational norms that were being examined. These specific norms may have been much more relatable to the student and therefore, significant predictors. The BACE and Typical Student measures were correlated with one another and drinking behavior while Campus Climate was not (Refer to *Table 2*). This suggests that Campus Climate is measuring something entirely different than the

other two measures, and it is not correlated or a significant predictor of drinking behavior. This would mean that the climate itself does not play a role and that only norms that can be directly tied to an individual are predictors of drinking behavior. Students may see themselves at the “exception to the rule” and remove themselves from the overall campus culture of drinking or abstaining from alcohol. If students do not think the norm affects them, even if it is present, then such norms may not be predictors of drinking behavior after all.

Another interesting finding in the data was uncovered surrounding campus climate. For those students that indicated that they were drinkers in high school and that their friends drank a lot, their behaviors at time one of data collection were significantly correlated with campus climate perceptions ($p < .05$). In addition, at time two of the data collection in the second semester of the participant’s freshman year, those that indicated that they were drinkers in college was significantly correlated with the campus climate index (*Refer to Tables 4 & 5*).

		Correlations	
		Campus Climate Index Round 2	Drinking Behavior
Campus Climate Index Round 2	Pearson	1	.207**
	Sig. (2-tail)		.015
	N	137	137
Drinking Behavior	Pearson	.207**	1
	Sig. (2-tail)	.015	
	N	137	147

This would suggest that those that are already enacting drinking behaviors at a higher risk are viewing the campus as supportive of that lifestyle. Therefore, campus climate may not be a driver of drinking behaviors, but a byproduct of the perception that is created through self-selection.

		Correlations			
		Campus Climate Index	Did you drink in H/S?	Do you currently drink?	I would say my friends drink a lot
Campus Climate Index	Pearson	1	.267**	.295**	.366**
	Sig. (2-tail)		.002	.001	.000
	N	138	136	135	136
Did you drink in H/S?	Pearson	.267**	1	.689**	.468**
	Sig. (2-tail)	.002		.000	.000
	N	136	136	135	136
Do you currently drink?	Pearson	.295**	.689**	1	.529**
	Sig. (2-tail)	.001	.000		.000
	N	135	135	135	135
I would say my friends drink a lot	Pearson	.366**	.468**	.529**	1
	Sig. (2-tail)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	136	136	135	136

These findings provide a great deal of information for university administration and programming boards. Overhaul campaigns of what the university promotes or values are often done to discourage the idea that any campus is a normatively “drinking” campus. However, according to this data, such campaigns would be ineffective. The overall campus climate is too detached from the individual in order to make an impact on their behaviors, and the campaigns for perceptive overhaul should focus more on the direct ties to the student. If the student feels a social pull to maintaining a wellness perspective on their behaviors and views the typical student as a safe drinker, there may be a way in which to influence their behaviors. However, before the assumptions are held, the university should test these ideas and collect data on a representative group of their students in order to determine if these findings hold true.

. Breaking down the notion that college equates to binge drinking and that other students support these behaviors will be crucial in breaking down the misconceptions that act as drivers

for the risky behavior. Norms are powerful drivers for social behavior, and when norms can be reconstructed and redefined, they can shift the entire atmosphere, situation and perception.

Appendix

Drinking Behaviors Index (Cronbach's Alpha = .839)

What is the average number of drinks you consume in a week?

When you drink alcohol, how many drinks do you usually consume at one sitting?

How many times have you been intoxicated during the past month?

BACE Index (Cronbach's Alpha = .930)

Drinking makes for great stories and offers the best memories of college life

As college students, we have the freedom to drink

College is the best time in our life for drinking

Nothing else compares with the sensation or thrill you get when you drink

Drinking allows college students to live life to the fullest

Alcohol excuses bad behavior

Drinking is an important part of the college experience

College is the time to get loose and party

College students are entitled to drink irresponsibly. It's what we are supposed to do

College students are more readily forgiven than other individuals when they get drunk and act inappropriately

Drinking helps create bonds and college friendships

Sharing drunken experiences makes the bonds of friendship stronger

I feel like I know what it means to be a college student when I am drinking

Drinking games provide a sense of security in that they give people something specific to do at parties

Drinking with friends makes activities that might otherwise be boring seem fun

Typical Student Index (Cronbach's Alpha = .807)

About how many alcoholic beverages do you think a typical Butler student drinks in one week?

About how many alcoholic beverages do you think a typical Butler student drinks at one sitting?

About how many times do you think a typical Butler student drinks to the point of intoxication during an average month?

Campus Climate Index (Cronbach's Alpha = .785)

Drinking is a common activity at Butler

Drinking is an important part of the social life at Butler

Most Butler students attend parties on the weekend

It is easy to obtain alcohol on Butler campus if you want to drink

The social activities on campus often involve alcohol

Butler has many social activities available to students on campus that DO NOT involve drinking
(reverse scored)

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