Student drinking rates

All incoming students under the age of 23 are required to complete the AlcoholEdu online education module and pre- and post-tests. The 2011-2012 tests show that, even though half of Carolina students don’t drink, students’ drinking rates are above the national average prior to their arrival on campus and at the midpoint of the fall semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Prior to Arrival</th>
<th>Midway through Fall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High-risk drinkers</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light/moderate drinkers</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-drinkers</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High-risk drinking means 4 or more drinks for women and 5 or more drinks for men at least once within the two weeks prior to the survey.

Who? Where? When?

Male and female students drink at similar rates, and they most commonly drink at off-campus residences and athletic events. The peak drinking days are Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Negative consequences of drinking

A majority of students did not experience negative consequences of drinking. However, Carolina students reported the following at a rate higher than the national average:

- missed class, performed poorly on an assignment and/or got behind in school
- had a hangover
- blacked out
- drove after 4 or more drinks
- rode with a driver who had been drinking
- was taken advantage of sexually
- took advantage of someone sexually

Student gains from AlcoholEdu

After completing the AlcoholEdu education module, Carolina students displayed an increase in knowledge and decision-making strategies about alcohol use. Students also reported that AlcoholEdu helped them establish a plan for responsible decisions about alcohol, prepared them to identify and/or help someone who has alcohol poisoning and changed their perceptions of others’ drinking-related behaviors.

AlcoholEdu exam scores

- Prior to arrival on campus: 53%
- Midway through fall term: 84%
University resources

To support all students in leading healthy lives, the university offers a variety of programs, services and other resources, a few of which are highlighted here.

“Talking Points,” online at www.sa.sc.edu/parents/communication/, gives tips on how to discuss alcohol use and consequences. The publication is mailed to parents of each incoming first-year student.

USC’s Substance Abuse Prevention and Education office coordinates the Carolina Community Coalition, a group of students, faculty, staff, local law enforcement and community partners that examines environment on campus and in Columbia and advocates change to improve health and well-being.

Group counseling from the Counseling and Human Development Center (803-777-5223) helps students make healthy lifestyle choices. Students who need more intensive counseling may be referred for treatment.

Substance-free events include Carolina After Dark, held on the last Friday of each month, and tailgates before each home football game.

What faculty can do
- Demand academic rigor from students throughout the week and hold early-morning and Friday classes
- Require students’ attention and participation in every class
- Identify students who are showing signs of possible alcohol abuse and refer them to campus resources

For more information, email sape@sc.edu or visit www.sa.sc.edu/sape/.

ALCOHOL-RELATED STUDENT ATTRITION

By the Numbers

10 - 20%
The estimated national benchmark range of attrition related to alcohol.

571
The estimated number of first-year Carolina students lost due to alcohol-related attrition.

$15.6 - $31.3 million
The estimated four-year revenue lost by the university due to alcohol-related attrition of first-year students (not accounting for ongoing attrition beyond first year).