

BIENNIAL REVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI'S ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG PROGRAMS 2020-22



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN
MISSISSIPPI.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Biennial Review	1
Overview	1
Consequences	1
Objectives of the Review	1
Purpose	1
Information Reviewed	1
COVID-19 Impact	1
Statement of Alcohol and Other Drug Program Goals	1
Goal One: Adopting Policies	1-2
Alcohol and Drug Policy	1
Athletics	2
The Code of Student Conduct	2
Goal Two: Educating the Campus Community	2-3
Annual Notification	2
Athletics	2
Department of Housing and Residence Life	2
Get Inclusive Training	3
Gulf Park Campus	3
Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life	3
Office of Health Promotion at Moffitt Health Center	3
UNV 100 AOD Module	3
Goal Three: Reducing Problematic Behaviors	3-4
Reporting an Incident	3
Incidents	3
Eagle Check-up	3
Maxient	4
Offenses Reported to University Police Department	4
Goal Four: Creating AOD-Free Environments	4
Campus Recreation	4
Eagle’s Nest Food Pantry	4
Southern Miss Activities Council	4
Goal Five: Supporting Students in Recovery	4
Summary	5
Strengths	5
Weaknesses	5
Recommendations	5
Conclusion	5

In accordance with the requirement of the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989, institutions must publish a biennial review containing information on campus alcohol and drug policies, programs, and standards related to its institution.

ABOUT THE BIENNIAL REVIEW

OVERVIEW

The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (DFSCA) of 1989, also known as the Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Act, requires all institutions of higher education to provide evidence that the institutions have developed policies, programs, and sanctions related to the use of alcohol and other drugs (AOD).

CONSEQUENCES

If an institution of higher education fails to submit the necessary certification when requested to do so or violates its certification, the Secretary of Education may terminate all forms of financial assistance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

The law requires that the institution conduct a biennial review of its programs with the following objectives:

- Determine the effectiveness of, and implement any needed changes to, the AOD prevention program; and
- Ensure that the sanctions developed are enforced consistently.

PURPOSE

The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) is committed to maintaining an alcohol- and drug-free community that provides students, faculty, and staff with a safe environment that supports the highest levels of learning. The use of alcohol and other illegal

drugs can lead to high-risk behaviors that impact not only the individual, but also the community as a whole. The purpose of this document is to provide a review and summation of programs and activities related to AOD prevention on the USM campuses during the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years.

INFORMATION REVIEWED

The following information was examined for the 2020-22 biennial review:

- University policies related to drug and alcohol use on campus and the sanctions imposed for failure to comply
- Prevention initiatives that were offered during the review period
- AOD incidents reported in Maxient, the public safety incident reporting software for colleges and universities, and to the University Police Department
- Future recommendations from various campus stakeholders

COVID-19 IMPACT

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic began. The University of Southern Mississippi resumed in-person classes in the fall of 2020 with health and safety protocols that included physical distancing, masking, contact tracing, and quarantine/isolation recommendations. As a result of the pandemic, many in-person events and programs were limited throughout the duration of this biennial report.

STATEMENT OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG PROGRAM GOALS

The University of Southern Mississippi values engagement that fosters personal growth, professional development, and a lifelong commitment to wellness. At Southern Miss, many directives and programs are in place to foster healthy lifestyle choices, including those focused on AOD. Goals related to AOD programming include the following:

- Adopting policies that reflect national recommendations
- Educating the campus community on AOD health risks and University policies
- Reducing problematic behaviors through
 - the consistent enforcement of policies regarding underage drinking and illicit drug use,
 - encouraging harm reduction behaviors in those at risk, and
 - identifying and assisting those at risk through referral services.
- Creating environments that include alcohol-free events and options
- Supporting students in recovery from substance abuse

GOAL ONE: ADOPTING POLICIES

Alcohol and Drug Policy

Consistent with state and federal law, the University will maintain a workplace and educational environment free from the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of any controlled substance and/or alcohol. The policy is implemented in

compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989. The policy applies to all employees, students, and visitors of The University of Southern Mississippi and encompasses the manufacture, sale, possession, distribution, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours; during class attendance; in a manner while off duty that impairs on-duty work performance; or in a manner while in attendance at an official University function or at an authorized University site that adversely affects the performance of the employee or student or may adversely affect the health or safety of any other person.

The University's Alcohol and Drug Policy was revised in 2017 to include an amnesty policy. The policy states that in the event of alcohol intoxication, alcohol-related injury, or drug overdose, medical attention should be sought and neither the impaired student nor the student providing assistance will face disciplinary action for the possession, use, or provision of alcohol or the possession or use of other drugs. In order to be granted amnesty, the student must complete a mandatory follow-up coordinated by the Office of the Dean of Students. Amnesty will not be granted if a student is belligerent toward emergency responders.

The USM Alcohol and Drug Policy was reviewed in June 2022 and addresses the legalization of marijuana in the state of Mississippi. The policy states that the manufacture, possession, use, distribution, sale, or purchase of marijuana is prohibited on University premises and constitutes a violation of the policy due to

the University's obligations under federal law as a federal contractor and recipient of federal funds. Working under the influence of marijuana is also prohibited and a violation of the University's policy. The policy was also updated to add sections for AOD testing for those working as a commercial motor vehicle driver (CDL) and those working as drivers of maritime vessels. Each of these testing programs requires drug and alcohol testing under each of the following circumstances: pre-employment, post-accident, under reasonable suspicion, return to duty follow-up, and random. The full AOD policy, which includes information regarding violations, controlled substance and alcohol testing, and amnesty is available at this [link](#). In June 2026, the AOD policy will be up for review.

Athletics

The University of Southern Mississippi's Department of Intercollegiate Athletics has developed and implemented a Drug Testing and Intervention Program, referred to as "The Program," for its student-athletes to promote their physical and mental well-being. "The Program" is designed to develop and maintain an environment that encourages student-athletes to avoid the use of unauthorized controlled substances, performance-enhancing drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and unapproved dietary supplements. "The Program" also includes significant sanctions and penalties that serve as a deterrent to drug use.

The University of Southern Mississippi works in conjunction with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in its Drug Testing Programs, both on-campus and during its post-season championship events. While the NCAA's Drug Testing Programs and The University of Southern Mississippi's Program are separate and distinct programs from one another, all Southern Miss student-athletes are subject to the rules and regulations of both. Student-athletes who participate in intercollegiate sports are subject to drug and alcohol testing

under NCAA regulations. They will also be subject to the drug testing program developed by the University's Department of Intercollegiate Athletics as set forth in the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics Drug Testing and Intervention Program. Finally, student-athletes are referred for a mandatory assessment by the University's Student Counseling Services, if deemed necessary by the Drug Testing Committee. An action plan is created for each student-athlete based on the recommendations from Student Counseling Services and Sports Medicine. The full description of "The Program" is available at this [link](#).

The Code of Student Conduct

USM established the Code of Student Conduct (CSC) to foster and protect the core missions of The University of Southern Mississippi by furthering the scholarly and civic development of the University's students in a safe and secure learning environment while also protecting the people, properties, and processes that support the University and its missions. The CSC applies to the on-campus conduct of all students and registered student organizations, including conduct using University computing or network resources. The CSC also applies to the off-campus conduct of students and registered student organizations.

The CSC explicitly prohibits conduct relating to AOD and assigns responsibility for investigating violations to UPD and/or other appropriate law enforcement agencies, as well as the Dean of Students and/or other designated university personnel. Sanctions are applied commensurate with the violation and consider any mitigating circumstances and aggravating factors. Sanctions may include any of the following: informal admonition, formal reprimand, probation, restitution, campus or community service, educational restorative justice, suspension, and expulsion. The full CSC document is available at this [link](#).

GOAL TWO: EDUCATING THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY

Annual Notification

The Annual Notification is a requirement mandating that the institution provide specific information regarding AOD to each employee and student in writing each year. The Annual Notification must include the following:

- Standards of conduct
- Disciplinary sanctions for violations of the standards of conduct
- Possible legal sanctions and penalties
- Statements of the health risks associated with AOD abuse, and
- Programs available to students and employees

The Annual Notification is sent via the USM Mailout every fall, spring, and summer semester. The USM Mailout is distributed by email to all faculty, staff and students weekly. The Annual Notification is also permanently posted on Moffitt Health Center's website, which is available at this [link](#).

Athletics

Southern Miss Athletics strives to promote and protect the safety, health, and well-being of each and every student-athlete. At the beginning of each academic year during each sport's team

meeting, athletic trainers educate student-athletes on impermissible drug use in compliance with the NCAA and departmental policies and regulations. Throughout the year, sports medicine staff will provide supplemental educational information as needed relative to the types of problems associated with AOD use. Athletics did not facilitate any alcohol and drug training independently during 2020-21 and 2021-22 but, instead, relied on the training being offered relative to alcohol and drugs as part of the University's Compliance and Ethics courses.

Department of Housing and Residence Life

The mission of the Department of Housing and Residence Life is to provide a high-quality physical, social, and cultural environment that encourages and supports the holistic development of residential students. During the term of this report, the resident assistant (RA) program model included a health and wellness component that offered options to facilitate/host AOD awareness programs. All programming efforts for the 2020-21 academic year were limited due to the COVID-19

pandemic, which affected face-to-face, traditional programming. During the 2021-22 academic year, the program model changed so that all programs focused on efforts to encourage student connections and community building. Specifically, the alcohol and drug related programs were delivered passively in the form of bulletin boards with AOD information. There were two active AOD programs, with the RA staff participating in tag-along system, in which the RA and their residents attended alcohol and drug awareness programs sponsored or facilitated by other departments.

Get Inclusive Training

In August 2021, USM began offering its alcohol and drug training for faculty, staff, and students through the Get Inclusive platform. Of the nearly 3,000 faculty and staff on campus, 56% completed the alcohol and drug training during this report's timeframe. Among the nearly 4,000 students, 52% completed the alcohol and consent training module.

Gulf Park Campus

The Gulf Park campus is primarily a commuter campus. All students at this location are also required to complete the UNV course which includes AOD content. Staff in Student Affairs and UPD did not host any programming specifically related to AOD awareness during this time frame. UPD had brochures available regarding substance use. The Campus Action Referral and Evaluation System (CARES) team often referred individuals to the full-time campus mental health professionals available to work with students in recovery or with questions about substance use treatment.

Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life

The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life works through USM-specific social event management programming and in support of each organization's national mandates for education on risk management, social event management, and social health-related issues. This encompasses, but is not limited to, alcohol-related risk, risk surrounding illicit drugs, sexual health, and others.

Each fall semester, all new members are required to attend an hour-long orientation, which provides general information about the University's alcohol policy, hazing, and general code of conduct. In

the fall of 2021, the Interfraternity Council (IFC) hosted a Beers Aren't Bad program for all new members, chapter presidents, risk management chairs, and social chairs. Program outcomes included increasing understanding of avoiding using alcohol to have fun, dealing with outside pressures without alcohol, and making better overall choices. Finally, the Sigma Phi Epsilon chapter at USM was nationally recognized for having alcohol-free fraternity housing as a part of their Balanced Man Program and also became an accredited living-learning community.

Office of Health Promotion at Moffitt Health Center

The Office of Health Promotion is a team of health educators, graduate assistants, and interns that seek to promote mental and physical health of students through services that teach prevention and awareness of health concerns in a way that empowers students to make healthy lifestyle choices. AOD efforts centered around offering the Eagle Check-up program and working with USM's Compliance and Ethics department to develop content for the online training modules required of all faculty, staff, and students at the University. Additional outreach and programming were greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, as face-to-face programming was limited, and resources within Moffitt Health Center were redirected to assist with management of COVID-19 cases.

UNV 100 AOD Module

All incoming students are required to take a one-credit-hour UNV 100 course, which provides students with important information that will help them learn about campus resources and adjust to life as a student. One of the weekly modules for the course addresses AOD and includes information on the health effects and consequences of AOD use. Completion rates for each semester are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Students Completing the UNV 100 AOD Module by Semester

	# STUDENTS ENROLLED	% COMPLETING AOD MODULE
Fall 2020	2,647	97.39
Spring 2021	245	98.78
Fall 2021	2,346	94.29
Spring 2022	263	95.06

GOAL THREE: REDUCING PROBLEMATIC BEHAVIORS

Reporting an Incident

All students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to report incidents of AOD misuse. To report a potential incident regarding a violation of laws of the State of Mississippi and/or USM policy, please contact one of the following non-emergency numbers:

- Hattiesburg Campus
 - Dean of Students Office: 601.266.6028
 - University Human Resources: 601.266.4050
 - University Police Department: 601.266.4986
- Gulf Park Campus
 - University Human Resources: 228.865.4581
 - Student Affairs: 228.214.3341
 - University Police Department: 601.266.4986

When calling, please provide as much information as possible about the person being reported, location, time and date. Concerns or incidents involving a student may also be reported using CARES, which is then sent to a team of campus professionals that will respond to reports of concern regarding the academic progress and well-being of students. To report a concern, please complete an online report using this [link](#).

Incidents

Eagle Check-up

In January 2018, Moffitt Health Center partnered with the School of Psychology to offer the Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students (BASICS) program. In January 2019, the program was renamed Eagle Check-up (ECU) and revised to

include an additional session to address marijuana use. The number of students completing the program by the referral source is listed below in Table 2. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, sessions were conducted virtually for the duration of this report, and the program was unavailable in the fall of 2021 due to staffing issues.

Table 2. Students Completing ECU by Referral Source and Academic Year

	2020-21	2021-22
Department of Housing and Residence Life/ Dean of Students	5	0
Self-referral	2	1

Maxient

USM uses Maxient to manage student conduct issues addressed by the Dean of Students. Maxient was utilized to tabulate charges for which individuals were found responsible and corresponding sanctions relating to AOD offenses issued for each academic year. Frequencies are listed in Tables 3 and 4 below.

Table 3: AOD-related Charges by Frequency

CHARGE	2020-21	2021-22
Alcohol violations	27	22
Drug violations	31	39

Table 4: Frequency of Sanctions for AOD-related Misconduct

SANCTION	2020-21	2021-22
Warning	13	1
Paper/Sign/Flyer	1	0
Judicial Educator	39	49
Apology Letter	1	0
Alcohol/Drug Class/Assessment	8	3
Referred to Student Counseling Services	1	3
Restitution	2	34
Disciplinary Probation	43	57

Offenses Reported to University Police Department

The number of offenses related to AOD that were reported to UPD or by a University official or other law enforcement agency, including the Hattiesburg, Gulf Park, and satellite locations for 2020 and 2021 are listed in Table 5. The Annual Security/Fire Safety Reports are located [here](#) on the UPD website.

Table 5: AOD-related Offenses (Hattiesburg and Gulf Park)

	2020	2021
Liquor law arrests	0	0
Drug law arrests	12	5
Liquor law violations referred for disciplinary action	29	14
Drug law violations referred for disciplinary action	31	36
DUI	3	3

GOAL FOUR: CREATING AOD-FREE ENVIRONMENTS

Campus Recreation

The mission of Southern Miss Campus Recreation is to provide quality and comprehensive programs, services and facilities that enhance recreation and wellness for the University community while supporting the educational mission of the University through student learning and development.

Campus Recreation provides a diverse offering of programs and services for Southern Miss students, faculty, staff and Payne Center members, including a comprehensive workout zone, group exercise classes, an indoor rock-climbing wall, a natatorium, outdoor adventure trips and clinics, personal training, intramural sports and club sports.

Eagle's Nest Food Pantry

The Eagle's Nest Food Pantry provides on-campus resources for Southern Miss students and staff who are temporarily experiencing

challenges accessing basic necessities, including food. The pantry also provides information and handouts for campus and community resources regarding AOD.

Southern Miss Activities Council

The Southern Miss Activities Council (SMAC) is a student-run, student-funded organization that focuses on offering a variety of educational and entertaining programs to complement the Southern Miss academic experience, while bringing programs to educate and enlighten the student body. Events offered include concerts, movies, speakers, novelty acts and many more events which are open to all students free of charge; SMAC interacted with anywhere from 100 to 1,400 students at their events.

GOAL FIVE: SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN RECOVERY

The Collegiate Recovery Community (CRC) was a program for students recovering from addictive disorders. The program was designed to assist them with any struggles they may have had in maintaining sobriety while being a successful college student.

The CRC was not active through the duration of this report, largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as declining levels of student involvement and interest.

SUMMARY

Strengths

Strengths that were identified by various campus entities included the following:

- Updating the University policy to address the legalization of cannabis in the state of Mississippi
- Programming efforts by IFC that address alcohol consumption among individuals in fraternities
- National recognition of Greek-affiliated alcohol-free housing through the Balanced Man Program
- Continued collaboration across departments to maximize resources and reach a potentially wider audience
- UNV completion rates have continued to be high, thereby indicating that freshmen and transfer students are completing AOD training shortly after beginning their first semester on campus.
- The implementation of the Get Inclusive online platform for the delivery of AOD education to the campus community

Weaknesses

Weaknesses that were identified by various campus entities included the following:

- The COVID-19 pandemic continued to limit opportunities for programming as face-to-face programs were very limited.
- Lack of adequate levels of funding necessary for education, events, activities, trainings addressing issues related to substance use and abuse

- Faculty involvement remains low in terms of integrating AOD as part of the curriculum and/or encouraging students to participate in AOD programming, including, but not limited to, providing points for attendance at such events.
- No follow-up courses for students once they are no longer freshmen or transfer students
- The decreased interest among students in the CRC has limited support options for students in recovery.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

- Continue to explore means of increasing levels of collaboration.
- Gather additional data to evaluate efforts.
- Determine the most effective means for delivering AOD programming virtually.
- Examine how to obtain support for expanded (annual) alcohol and drug training for all students regardless of academic standing.
- Resume the UNV Alcohol and Drug Climate Survey to assess substance use among new students.
- Determine if there are opportunities to obtain grants to support further education and outreach related to AOD.
- Identify opportunities to reach out to instructors relative to encouraging students to participate in AOD programming as part of a day of classes or for extra credit.

CONCLUSION

The University of Southern Mississippi continues to refine their alcohol and drug programming to prevent the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by both students and employees. As illustrated by the data, we continue to make positive strides in terms of level of education, as well as consistency of

programming efforts, as we identify additional opportunities to inform our campus community about how to adopt healthier lifestyles. Our institution remains committed to becoming a substance-free environment and furthers those aims through the efforts detailed herein.

