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About the Biennial Review

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.

## **STATEMENT OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG PROGRAM GOALS**

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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:

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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.

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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

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)**

## SUMMARY

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### 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

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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