

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS—Student/Staff Guidelines

WHAT STUDENTS AND STAFF NEED TO KNOW

Our goal is to provide students and staff with information about alcohol and drugs of abuse, the college position on use, the risks and consequences associated with illicit use, and ways to get help for those who may be experiencing problems. Healthy choices and positive decisions can only be based upon having accurate information. If you have any questions about these policies, please contact the Student Services Administration office in Building 7 at 253.566.5115 or the Human Resources Office in Building 14 at 253.566.5054.

HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH USE AND ABUSE OF ILLICIT DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

In general, drug use and abuse of alcohol can:

- Interfere with learning. Studies show that students who use illicit drugs and abuse alcohol significantly tend to have lower grades overall.
- Distort sensory input and perceptions and exaggerate emotions. When that happens, users aren't fully in control of their actions. They are at higher risk for harming themselves or others. Drinking and driving is one example, date rape and increased arguments or fighting are others.
- Make users feel that they are performing at their best when actual performance is very compromised. This can result in poorer grades or work performance. It may lead to an increased risk of accidents occurring due to misjudging a situation or missing key information.
- Put the user at risk for medical complications or medical emergencies. For example, ingesting large quantities of alcohol can interfere with breathing, and an overdose of some drugs can cause cardiac irregularities or even cardiac arrest.

SPECIFIC HEALTH RISKS OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE

Health Risks of Psychoactive Drugs

All psychoactive drugs (including alcohol) can produce negative health risks associated with long-term use. In addition, all these drugs can pose serious risks such as abnormal growth, brain damage and birth defects for the fetus of a drug-using female. The following are possible health risks:

Stimulants: Includes cocaine, nicotine, amphetamines. Anxiety, agitation, malnutrition, high blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, insomnia, amphetamine/cocaine psychosis, convulsions, cardiac failure.

Depressants-sedatives/Hypnotics: Includes alcohol, methaqualone, benzodiazepines, barbiturates. Central nervous system depression, impaired thinking and judgment, loss of coordination, disorientation, loss of memory and inhibitions, coma, possible death from overdose.

Cannabis: Includes marijuana and hashish. Confusion and disorientation, difficulty concentrating, short-term memory loss, poor motivation, anxiety, fatigue, paranoia, psychosis, lung damage, cancer, reproductive abnormalities, cardiovascular effects.

Special Note Regarding Marijuana: *Marijuana remains illegal for minors (persons under 21 years of age) to possess, sell or use and is illegal to possess for a person any amounts over 28.3 grams. Marijuana remains illegal under federal law and policies concerning marijuana at the college remained unchanged. It is illegal to produce, distribute or use marijuana on college property or during college-sponsored activities.*

Hallucinogens: Includes LSD, PCP, mescaline and peyote, amphetamine variants. Illusions, hallucinations, poor perception of time and distance, increased heart rate and blood pressure, panic flashbacks, may precipitate psychosis.

Narcotics: Includes opium, heroin, morphine, codeine, methadone. Anxiety, drowsiness and lethargy, nausea, mental confusion, constipation, respiratory depression, coma or death as a result of overdose.

Inhalants: Includes glue, paint thinner, gasoline, aerosol sprays. Nausea, headaches, perceptual distortions, central nervous system depression, impaired judgment and thinking, damage to brain live, kidney, bone marrow and lungs, sudden death.

Alcohol: Effects

Alcohol consumption causes a number of marked changes in behavior. Even low doses significantly impair the judgment and coordination required to drive a car safely, increasing the likelihood that the driver will be involved in an accident. Low to moderate doses of alcohol also increase the incidence of a variety of aggressive acts, including spouse and child abuse. Moderate to high doses of alcohol cause marked impairments in higher mental functions, severely altering a person's ability to learn and remember information. Very high doses cause respiratory depression and death. If combined with other depressants of the central nervous system, much lower doses of alcohol will produce the effects just described.

Repeated use of alcohol can lead to dependence. Sudden cessation of alcohol intake is likely to produce withdrawal symptoms, including severe anxiety, tremors, hallucinations and convulsions. Alcohol withdrawal can be life-threatening. Long-term consumption of large quantities of alcohol, particularly when combined with poor nutrition, can also lead to permanent damage to vital organs such as the brain and the liver.

Mothers who drink alcohol during pregnancy may give birth to infants with fetal alcohol syndrome. These infants have irreversible physical abnormalities and mental retardation. In addition, research indicates that children of alcoholic parents are at greater risk than other youngsters of becoming alcoholics.

COUNSELING AND HELPING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS AND STAFF

The State of Washington, by law, provides what is called a "continuum" of help. No matter what kind of alcohol or drug problem exists or how serious it may be, there is a treatment resource available to address the problem. This ranges from immediate medical crisis (detoxification) to

inpatient and outpatient treatment for chemical dependency, to aftercare and follow-up services. The type and length of treatment will be set to the level needed to take care of the problem and help the person restore to normal, alcohol and drug-free functioning. The agencies that provide the various types of treatment are required to maintain high professional standards, and are regulated by the State of Washington, Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse. Treatment programs are required to provide only the right types and amounts of professional care necessary to restore and maintain normal functioning.

Tacoma Community College does not offer direct treatment for alcohol or drug abuse or addiction. It can and will assist any student or staff member seeking an appropriate service. Getting the right type and amount of help begins by getting a thorough assessment of the problem. Entitlement programs and partial or full private insurance coverage may be available to you. Students and staff may contact any of the following resources both on and off campus to get assistance:

**Emergencies and Poisoning Information
911**

**24-Hour Alcohol and Drug Information Line
1.206.722.3700**

**United Way HELP Line
1.800.572.4357**

**CARE
253.572.2273**

**24-Hour Alcoholics Anonymous Line
253.474.8897**

**Al-Anon/Alateen
1.800.726.8094**

**Employee Assistance Program
Olympia 360.407.9490; 1.877.313.4455
www.hr.wa.gov/EAP**

**TCC Counseling Center
Building 7, 253.566.5122**

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

Alcohol and Illegal Drugs—Policies

It is the college's intent to provide a drug-free, healthful, safe and secure work and educational environment and to comply with the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-570, Title IV, Sub-title B) and its amendment of the 1989 (Public Law 101-226). The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in and on Tacoma Community College premises.

No employee will report to work while under the influence of alcohol or any unlawful controlled substance. Violation of this policy by any employee may result in reasonable suspicion testing, referral for mandatory evaluation/treatment for substance abuse disorder or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in accordance with federal and state laws, applicable collective bargaining unit agreements, tenure laws or other college policies. The policies related to alcohol and drug use are available for staff through Human Resources.

It is TCC policy that any student who violates a provision of the Code of Student Conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action is covered in detail in WAC 132V-121-070 of the Code, and may include: 1) disciplinary warning, 2) disciplinary reprimand, 3) disciplinary probation, 4) disciplinary suspension, or 5) expulsion. Copies of the Code of Student Conduct are available in the Student Services Administration office in Building 7 or online at <http://www.tacomacc.edu/abouttcc/policies/codeofstudentconduct/>.

In addition, Washington State statutes and federal laws make the possession or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol a crime subject to imprisonment, fine or both.

LEGAL PENALTIES FOR UNLAWFUL USE OF ALCOHOL OR ILLICIT DRUGS

A summary of the legal penalties for the unlawful possession or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol can be found at the Counseling Center, Building 18, 253.566.5122. If you wish more information on these, you will be referred to appropriate federal, state or local resources that can provide more details and answer questions. There are a number of laws that deal with alcohol and drug abuse. It is your responsibility to understand and obey these.

Violations of this policy by any student may result in disciplinary warning, reprimand, probation, suspension or expulsion. Violations by employees may result in referral for mandatory evaluation/treatment for substance abuse disorder or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. In addition, state and federal laws make possession or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol a crime subject to imprisonment, fine or both.