

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING UNIVERSITY LIFE

### ALCOHOL

“Nothing interrupts the growth and social development of college students more than the abuse of alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes. Excessive college drinking is too often accepted as a “rite of passage”, thus nurturing a behavior that is destroying lives and endangering our country’s future.”

Recent statistics (2012) taken from our college survey representing all classes and ethnicities reflect use of the following substances at least once in the past year:

Cigarettes.....	33%
Alcohol.....	67%
Marijuana.....	33%
Amphetamines (speed).....	6%

Chemically, alcohol is a depressant. It first suppresses the frontal lobe of the brain that monitors and determines behavior and perspective. This also lowers impulse control and inhibitions, allowing for a lessened ability to make healthy or less risky choices. Next, it affects motor skills resulting in slurring of words, balance and perception problems, and eye-hand coordination. Last, it affects the very basic life systems: heart beat, respiration, and the ability to swallow.

It takes the body 1 hour to metabolize ½ oz. of alcohol – the amount found in a “typical” serving. Unfortunately, college students drink out of mugs, plastic cups, etc. so their serving is seldom a “typical” 12 oz. beer, 6 oz. wine glass, or 1 oz. shot glass (all of which = ½ oz. alcohol).

If the body gets too much alcohol to safely metabolize, it regurgitates, passes out, or goes to sleep. If that alcohol enters the body too rapidly for the body to quickly register the unsafe levels, the body functions may actually shut down (or be completely depressed), resulting in death.

Binge drinking is the most serious drug problem on campuses. Binge drinking is defined as 5 or more drinks within 2 hours for men, 4 or more for women. Please note that only 33% of students at Shepherd report having binged. That means that **66%** of the students DO NOT binge drink.

**Consequences** of alcohol and other drug use are equally devastating.

Trouble with police/other authorities	7.3
Driven a car while under the influence	12.3
Had a memory loss	21.7
Done something I later regretted	22.2
Had sex without giving consent	2.4
Had unprotected sex	15.5

**Typical events that present problems or emotional upset:**

Adjustment and homesickness (often homesickness hits 2<sup>nd</sup> semester)

Reaction to Mid-term grades

Behavioral problems - negative reaction to Shepherd's rules

First semester grades

Returning home for a visit or school break – What are the rules? How and what do we negotiate?

Return for second semester? Is there a question?

Spring Break - Where and with whom will it be spent?

End of year – final exams, separation from friends AND Will they return?

When calling Counseling Services, please respect your student's confidentiality. We are, however, always willing to listen.

**TRUST YOUR STUDENT** – You have put approximately 18 years into them. It may be harder for you to let go than it is for them.