

# The Garland Initiative

Recommendations from the  
President's Task Force on Alcohol Abuse  
Prevention

The President's Task Force on Alcohol Abuse Prevention fundamentally believes that a vibrant learning environment is built upon a climate of integrity, engagement and safety. We applaud Dr. Garland for expecting us to be **bold, forceful, and imaginative** in making recommendations to deal more effectively with Miami's complex, chronic and disruptive problem of alcohol abuse that jeopardizes the learner's pursuits of the mind and heart. We endorse Dr. Garland's resolve, expressed in his written charge to the task force, that preventing alcohol abuse is vitally important for Miami University, that the wellbeing and education of our students deserve our most serious consideration, and that simple solutions will fail. All of our students, and their families, rightfully expect and deserve an atmosphere of highest educational quality and an atmosphere that promotes positive growth into adulthood.

Over the past five months of intensive work the task force has taken President Garland's charge very seriously. We have been both deliberate and thorough in examining current practices to address the problem. We have consulted with numerous experts and we have received written and oral reports from many stakeholders. We also have examined relevant professional literatures to identify best practices in the field of alcohol/drug abuse prevention as they pertain to adolescents and young adults and to college campuses.

We are impressed by the dedication of many Miami University staff and faculty, students, and community members, who have been working tirelessly to address Miami's alcohol problems. However, our consensus conclusion about Miami's current efforts, when measured against a standard of best practices in alcohol/drug abuse prevention, is that **as an institution and a larger community we can and must do better!**

We must expand our efforts to insure that our initiatives reflect a theoretically and empirically grounded comprehensive, well-integrated strategy that confronts and changes Miami's cultural norms related to alcohol. Further, increased efforts should imbed alcohol abuse intervention in the context of expanded and improved efforts to promote positive academic, emotional, and behavioral development of our students, to promote healthy attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol consumption, and to prevent problematic drinking. An enhanced strategy must incorporate a wider range of evidence-based methods and a more intense set of learning opportunities, with adults and peers, that promote improved awareness and understanding of the problem, and development and enhancement of positive skills that obviate alcohol abuse. Success with this enhanced strategy also will hinge on better ongoing training and support for relevant individuals and organizations. In addition, a commitment to, and sufficient infrastructure for, ongoing outcome evaluation that documents results of specific programs within the strategy relative to particular goals and objectives will be essential.

We urge that Dr. Garland **not** view the recommendations as a menu from which some, but not others, might be chosen. Such an approach, in our judgment, would seriously compromise the president's commitment to "make significant progress in laying this problem to rest." Moreover, implementation of the proposed strategy will create a financial burden for the institution. Nonetheless, our consensus conclusion as a task force is that a coherent and comprehensive strategy must be implemented. This strategy will pave the way for enhancing Miami's climate for learning, and establishing Miami as a model institution for ameliorating threats to its intellectual climate. We urge that President Garland and the university prioritize needed fundraising to support the significant opportunity that these recommendations afford to make a real difference. We strongly endorse and encourage implementation of the following recommendations:

## **Recommendations from TFAAP**

### **Campus Wide Systemic Efforts**

- Increase the percentage of undergraduate classes scheduled for early mornings and Fridays to at least 30% by Fall 2008 for each academic division; and support related COAD initiatives to promote stronger academic engagement of students throughout the week.
- Increase the operational and continuing education budgets for support of the implementation of the recommendations, programs, training and staffing identified in this report with administrative oversight provided by the Vice-president of Student Affairs.
- Consult and assist student organizations with development of plans for approving or “certifying” local bar and club owners for hosting organizational events.
- Support the plan for the construction of a new student union and encourage that this project be given high priority.

### **Residence Halls**

- Enhance the monitoring in the Heritage Commons complex by adding three live-in professional residential staff, with each living in a separate building and having responsibility for two buildings, thus ensuring supervision during non-business hours by Fall 2007.
- Prohibit the delivery of alcohol to students living in on-campus residential facilities beginning July 1, 2006.
- Upgrade of the Resident Assistant position to at least junior standing, with increased responsibilities (including bell desk duties) and enhanced compensation by Fall 2007.
- Establish alcohol and drug recovery housing on campus.

### **Office of Ethics and Conflict Resolution**

- Increase the fees for violation of the Student Code of Conduct alcohol policy:
  - 105 A 1st offense \$250 ; 2<sup>nd</sup> offense \$500
  - 105 B 1<sup>ST</sup> offense \$150; 2<sup>nd</sup> offense \$300
- Include a group intervention as part of the assessment portion of the alcohol violation sanction.
- Support the extension of Student Code of Conduct violations noted on the transcript to seven years.

- Empower Judicial Affairs to link Student Code of Conduct violations to possible suspension of parking privileges, loss of registration position within an academic class, and suspension of opportunity to study abroad.
- Require that transcript notations for non-academic suspensions include the specific violation.
- Implement the following sanctions for the use of false identification violations:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> violation – ethics and integrity education with a \$250 fee assessment
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> violation – automatic suspension from the university
- Release to student and local newspapers monthly aggregate information on actions of the Office of Ethics and Conflict Resolution on alcohol related decisions.

### **Staffing**

- Add at least three additional positions in Health Services with specialties addressing alcohol education, intervention, and treatment.
- Provide financial resources for all staff supporting the alcohol education/intervention efforts (i.e. these should be continuing university positions rather than grant supported positions).
- Collaborate with the City of Oxford to create a new position of off-campus housing and community relations (at least a half time position).

### **Training**

- Provide training on alcohol education, intervention, and treatment on a regular basis to all relevant stakeholder groups including, but not limited to the President’s Executive Council, the Board of Trustees, admission and orientation staff, and other faculty and staff.
- Improve admissions staff knowledge about the healthy attitudes and behaviors for appropriate use of alcohol at Miami University and request this knowledge be disseminated to high school guidance counselors, potential students, and parents.
- Provide ongoing alcohol education and training to front line personnel (e.g., Campus Police, Residence Life, and Office of Ethics and Conflict Resolution).

### **Programming**

- Require all first and second year main campus undergraduates to live in on-campus housing by Fall 2007; with exemptions as stated in the recent Division of Student Affairs proposal titled Enhancement of First & Second Year Programs at Miami University.

- Support adoption of the recent Division of Student Affairs proposal for Enhancement of First & Second Year Programs at Miami University which will expand programming for second year students.
- Continue to fund the AlcoholEdu program as a requirement for first year students.
- Implement a second year substance abuse education program using most recent local data as a resource.
- Require a one-credit hour Personal Health course for all second year students by Fall 2008.
- Provide financial support for the Campus Assistance Program through the pilot phase and beyond, if appropriate.
- Develop an educational program on ethics and integrity for students who are found to be responsible for violation of Section 02.102 (Dishonesty) of the Code of Student Conduct, which subsumes using or possessing false or altered identification.
- Continue to support and assess After Dark as an alternative activity with improved programming activities.
- Pilot for a two year period expanded hours of the Recreational Sports Center – remaining open until at least 2 a.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights – with relevant programming to be determined in consultation with students.
- Encourage the formation of an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) chapter on campus.
- Provide comprehensive on-campus alcohol and drug assessment including the BASICS assessment and drug testing.

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

- Undertake ongoing quality assessment and improvement and outcome evaluation for all recommendations.
- Develop a strategy for ongoing assessment by the Center for Health Enhancement, in consultation with additional experts as appropriate.
- Provide appropriate resources for assessment needs.
- Require the Vice-President of Student Affairs to provide an annual report of quality assessment and improvement and outcome evaluation findings to the President.

### **Recommendations for further consideration**

- Send a consistent message to Miami University Community by prohibiting the marketing, sale, or consumption of alcohol at all student centered events (e.g., all athletic events, all concerts, etc.)
- Develop strategies for increasing adult role model interactions and mentoring for first year students
- Encourage and support development by the Office of Finance and Business Services of a plan for the university to systematically “buy back” or purchase residential housing in the mile square with enhanced incentives for residential ownership.
- Create a holding facility with professional care for students dangerously intoxicated.
- Encourage the City of Oxford to establish a Municipal Court.

## **Appendix**

### **President's Task Force on Alcohol Abuse Prevention Summary of Committee Activities**

**During the preparation of our recommendations, the Task Force members met with the following individuals from Miami University:**

- Karen Murray – Director of Health Education
- Brad Bates – Director of Intercollegiate Athletics
- Troy Hartman – Assistant Athletic Director for Corporate Relations
- Susan Vaughn – Director of Judicial Affairs, Office of Ethics and Student Resolution
- Jerry Olson – Director of Residence Life
- Judith Sessions – Chair of 2009 Coordinating Council Academic Integrity Committee
- Maria Carrubba – Assistant Training Director Substance Abuse, Student Counseling
- Peter Miller – Assistant Senior Vice-president for Auxiliary Enterprises
- Lucinda Coveney – Director of Housing Contracts and Meal Plans
- Adolph Haislar – Senior Associate Vice-president for Finance and Business Services
- Steve Dealph – Director of Alexander Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life

**The Task Force members met with the following individuals from the community:**

- Chief Steve Schwein and Det. John Buchholz – City of Oxford Police Department
- Brent Devery – Regional Director of Ohio Liquor Control Division
- Andy Amarantos and Terry Amarantos, Owners of Skippers Pub and SDS Pizza

**Three members of the Task Force met with Miami University Parents Council on March 4, 2006.**

**The Task Force held two open meeting to receive input from university and community members:**

- February 23, 2006 – Hall Auditorium, @ 3:30 pm
- February 23, 2006 – Oxford Municipal Court House, @ 5:30 pm

**The Task Force members also reviewed a variety of materials including:**

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Task Force of the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Reports:
  - A call to action: changing the culture of drinking at U.S. Colleges
  - Reducing Alcohol Problems on Campus: a guide to planning and evaluation
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation "A Matter of Degree, the Advocacy Initiative" Case studies at the Universities of Vermont, Iowa, Nebraska, and Delaware
- Recovery Dorm Success: Case Western University, Ohio, and Grand Valley State University, Michigan

- Science Practice Perspectives, The National Institute on Drug Abuse, Vol.3 No.1 December 2005
- Peer-reviewed, published research articles on alcohol use and misuse
- Lay articles on alcohol use and misuse
- Miami University Code of Student Conduct
- Course schedule data sheets

Task Force members also participated in several late-night rides with Miami University Police Officers in an effort to acquire a better understanding of behaviors in which students are participating.