Alcohol Policy

Policy/Procedure

Philosophy

As members of an academic community, students can expect an atmosphere that supports personal growth and learning. However, because we are also members of a residential educational community, students have an obligation to support and foster an environment for themselves and others that promotes and enhances our ability to work, study, live and learn together. Issues around the use, misuse and abuse of alcohol often have an impact on both the academic and social success of students in our community.

The College acknowledges and supports the safe, legal and responsible consumption of alcohol. The College requires that its students comply with legal standards applicable to alcohol use. Further, it is the expectation of the community that those students who are legally eligible to drink will affirm their commitment to community living by consuming alcohol responsibly and in locations that do not put underage students at risk. This Alcohol Policy, together with the Community Standards and the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, provide the framework for guiding your decisions around alcohol.

Effects of Alcohol

Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant that is absorbed into the bloodstream and transmitted to all parts of the body. Moderate doses reduce physical coordination and mental alertness, while larger doses drastically impair an individual’s ability to function, sometimes to the point of unconsciousness or death. Long term drinking increases the risk of developing liver and heart disease, circulatory and stomach problems, various forms of cancer and irreversible brain damage.

- Alcohol is the number one killer of young people in America.
- Over 70 percent of all acquaintance rapes involve alcohol.
- Every 21 minutes someone is killed in an alcohol-related accident.

For more information on the effects of alcohol, contact the Counseling Center or Health Center. If you need help managing alcohol use in your life or in the life of someone close to you, please refer to the Resources section of this policy.

The Law

- The minimum age in Pennsylvania for the purchase, consumption, or possession of alcoholic beverages is 21 years.
- It is illegal to furnish or serve alcoholic beverages to any person under the age of 21.
Student Social Conduct: Alcohol Policy

- The law prohibits carrying or consuming alcoholic beverages in open containers out-of-doors on public property, regardless of a person’s age.
- It is illegal to possess or use false identification or to misrepresent one’s age for the purpose of obtaining or consuming alcoholic beverages.
- No group which is not licensed by the Liquor Control Board may sell alcoholic beverages. The use of chits, chips, or other means of exchange in place of cash violates the law.
- It is illegal to appear in any public place manifestly under the influence of alcohol to the degree that you may endanger yourself or other persons or property, or annoy persons in your vicinity.
- A person under the age of 21 is prohibited from operating a motor vehicle with ANY alcohol in his/her system.
- It is illegal and dangerous to drive under the influence of alcohol (blood and alcohol level of .08% or greater).

Community Standards

In addition to accountability under the laws of Pennsylvania, the following list contains specific provisions of Dickinson College’s standards of conduct for which students are accountable under the Community Standards. When community members ignore their legal responsibilities or fail to reason, control their actions, or consider the impact of their behavior on others due to illegal or excessive alcohol consumption, they are engaging in behavior that threatens not only themselves but the community as a whole.

Underage Possession/Consumption

Student under the legal drinking age may not possess, consume or be under the influence of alcohol.

Drinking Games

Any activity or game that promotes or encourages the consumption of large amounts of alcohol is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, such activities as beer pong, quarters, and flip cup.

Alcohol Paraphernalia

The possession of materials used in drinking games or other activities that promote or encourage the consumption of large amounts of alcohol is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, beer pong tables, beer funnels, beer/party balls, kegs and beer bongs.

Hosting Underage Guests
Any student who serves alcohol to underage students or does not have the service of alcohol monitored by a TIPS-trained bartender is violating College policy.

Public Intoxication

Any student who is under the influence of alcohol resulting in a disturbance to community members, college officials, law enforcement and/or property is violating college policy.

Hosting/Attending an Unregistered Event

Any event with alcohol and five (5) or more guests, in addition to the residents, must be registered. Hosting or attending an unregistered event with alcohol that should have been registered through the Office of Student Activities is prohibited.

Kegs/ Large Volume Containers

Kegs, beer/party balls, punch bowls or the equivalent are not permitted unless specifically authorized by the Student Activities Office.

Multiple Locations

Events or activities, whether formally or informally organized, which simultaneous serve alcohol in three or more spaces, or encourage dangerous consumption, are not permitted (i.e., “Around the World” or progressive parties).

Other Dangerous Conduct

The consumption of large quantities of alcohol or the sustained consumption of alcohol that interferes with a student’s participation in the academic residential community and/or that poses a risk to the health or safety of the students or others is prohibited.

Violations of the Alcohol Policy

- Students who violate the law may be accountable to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The specific violations and potential penalties are set forth in the table entitled “Pennsylvania State Sanctions Related to Alcohol and Drug Offenses” set forth in the Student Handbook.

- Students who violate the College’s Alcohol Policy are in violation of the Community Standards and will be held accountable.

- If students under the age of 21 are found to be in a location where alcohol is being consumed, other than at an event being held in compliance with the College’s Hosting Guide, the College will presume that the underage students are in the possession of, and have been consuming, alcohol. It is, therefore, best for those under the age of 21 not to be in situations that give the appearance of Alcohol Policy violations or violations of Pennsylvania Law.
• Those students over the age of 21 who are hosting unregistered events at which alcohol is provided should know that they bear a special responsibility under the Community Standards and state law to prove that they were not providing alcohol to minors and that persons under the age of 21 were not consuming or possessing alcohol.

• The first time a student is found responsible for underage possession or consumption of alcohol, he or she will generally receive a written warning. A second violation may include a fine and/or Alcohol Education Class. Any violation thereafter may include (but not necessarily be limited to) all of the above in addition to stayed suspension or alcohol assessment. The College reserves the right to notify a student’s parents of alcohol violations.

• Students hospitalized as a result of alcohol consumption or cited by the police for any violations of alcohol laws will receive automatic parental notification and an assessment.

Events with Alcohol

Events, as defined by the College, at which alcohol will be present, must be registered with the Student Activities Office when:

a. The number of people attending the event in a residential space will be equal to the occupancy plus five, or

b. The event is held in a general campus location, such as the Stern, the HUB, the Depot, or the Trout Gallery, or

c. The event is held outdoors, regardless of the number of people attending.

Guidelines for registering and hosting an event with alcohol can be found in the Dickinson College “Hosting Guide” which is available in the Student Activities Office.

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<th>History/Revision Information</th>
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Responsible Office/Division: 

Effective Date: 

Last Amended Date:
Student Social Conduct: Alcohol Policy

Next Review Date:

Also Found In: Student Handbook