

**Report on April 2005 Site Visit and  
Recommendations  
University of Kentucky  
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*Prepared by*

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**(This Report is not intended as legal advice.)**

## **I. Preface**

The idea for this Report originated in Fall 2004 when I met administrators from the University of Kentucky while serving as a presenter at a higher education law and policy conference in Lexington. Following a series of discussions, principally with Meg Quarles and Becky Jordan, I was invited to spend several days on the University of Kentucky campus for a full site visit. The purpose of the site visit was to evaluate the University of Kentucky's approach to high-risk alcohol use issues. During the April 27–29, 2005 visit, I explored the campus and met with a number of individuals connected with the University of Kentucky. The groups and individuals with whom I met represented a broad cross-section of stakeholders in and around the University of Kentucky campus.

The University of Kentucky community is generally prepared for self-evaluation, and its representatives were typically candid and forthcoming with information. This strong level of cooperation has to be the direct result of the president's interest in this issue and of the groundwork laid by Meg Quarles, Becky Jordan, Victor Hazard, and Pat Terrell.

Section II of this Report provides a broad overview of the University of Kentucky campus environment and the greater high-risk alcohol context. Section III offers an environmental perspective regarding student high-risk behavior, particularly alcohol- and drug-related behavior. Section IV considers the proposed Facilitator Model for risk management. Section V provides specific recommendations and observations by area of concern, such as judicial affairs. Section VI offers and refers to conclusions and recommendations for the University of Kentucky campus.

The extensive discussion and recommendations in this Report are designed for consideration and use at the University of Kentucky. To assist the University in organizing and potentially implementing the recommendations, I have produced a separate Executive Summary

of major recommendations. The Executive Summary may be useful for the campus community coalition, campus leaders, and other stakeholders to underscore key points of any initiatives generated by the Report. However, reviewing the Executive Summary should not be a substitute for reading and digesting the full Report. Stakeholders should not simply follow the recommendations, but should consider the rationale underlying the recommendations. Hopefully, the Report and Executive Summary will spur on the *process* of addressing high-risk alcohol use environmentally.

## II. Overview

Problems of high-risk alcohol and other drug use pervade American campuses in this generation. No campus — even campuses with zero-tolerance policies, dry campuses, and campuses with strong anti-alcohol and drug philosophies — is entirely immune from the effect of alcohol and drug use. The University of Kentucky is caught in the greater environment that all campuses of this era share: concern over high-risk alcohol use boils down to a matter of degree and severity for a particular campus. Thus, the University of Kentucky should be highly attentive to high-risk alcohol use on campus.

Several scientifically recognized measures have been developed to evaluate a campus's alcohol culture. The most notorious and publicly known is the "binge" drinking measure coined by Henry Wechsler, a scientist and author connected with Harvard School of Public Health and who has received funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Wechsler's approach focuses on measuring "binge" drinking as a way to gauge the severity of alcohol use and abuse on campus. Under Wechsler's definition, "binge" drinking occurs when a man consumes five or more drinks in a row on at least one occasion within a two-week period, or when a woman has four or more drinks in a row during that period. For various reasons, the "binge" drinking measure has generated controversy within the scientific community. For example, Wechsler's measure does not consider the size of drink, body weight of drinker, or length of time over which drinking occurred. Thus, most scientists who evaluate campus alcohol culture do not use either "binge" as a primary term to describe dangerous drinking, or Wechsler's methodological approach. In fact, research suggests that mere use of the term "binge" drinking may actually contribute to the problem it attempts to solve, and may create confusion among the student body. For example, using Wechsler's standard, male college students who consume five drinks in a row are bingers. Those same students may have been advised by health educators that

responsible drinkers pace themselves at no more than one drink per hour. But because students often attend social events for five or more hours at a time, that “careful” consumption rate would also label them as bingers. Consequently, the larger scientific community prefers to use the term “high-risk” drinking to describe phenomena related to modern college alcohol culture. The Core Institute provides the most relied upon information about high-risk drinking on American campuses today. The Core Alcohol and Drug Survey yields detailed information regarding patterns of alcohol use, and non-use, on campus. The University of Kentucky has employed this instrument, and certain key findings in this Report stem from the administration of the Core.

One target measure in evaluating an alcohol culture on campus is the frequency of prolonged drinking. One common benchmark for colleges is to examine the number and frequency of female students who drink four drinks in a sitting and the number of male students who drink five drinks in a sitting. This measure — often looked at for the number of such drinking episodes in a two-week period — is a common way to give relative weight to the alcohol culture on a given campus. Nationally, it is common for campuses, on average, to score on the prime indicator somewhere just below the fiftieth percentile. In other words, roughly half of American college students engage in significant drinking as measured in two-week periods. But it is important to recognize that this drinking is not itself necessarily high risk, and that other factors must be considered. For example, a 300-pound football player will not become legally intoxicated from five drinks consumed one per hour over a five-hour period. We assume, however, that efforts that reduce Core drinking rates will impact high-risk behavior, such as a 120-pound female who downs four drinks rapidly and then drives away.

Certain stakeholders, particularly parent and alumni groups, often radically misperceive the intensity and frequency of the modern alcohol culture. Students at the University of Kentucky, and elsewhere, typically report that they drink to become intoxicated; moreover, they

often drink as rapidly as possible to become intoxicated in a short period of time, and they often drink with the intent of “hooking up” with random individuals.

The good news for the University of Kentucky is that it sits at about the national and regional averages for key indicators. Notably, the University of Kentucky environment has a significant non-drinking population; this group is self-identified and appears to be larger in number than is typical around the country. That statistic is encouraging.

Another encouraging feature of the University of Kentucky campus is that a large number of students leave for a significant part of the weekend to go home, and appear not to participate in certain aspects of the alcohol culture on the weekends. Also, the University of Kentucky student population, which is proximate to the campus or on it, typically walks between alcohol events; therefore, driving risks seem to be significantly lower than at certain other campuses. Another feature is that students often drink in small- to medium-size gatherings; thus, drinking is often decentralized.

The significant number of non-drinkers, the significant number of partial participants in the alcohol culture, the decentralized nature of drinking, and the walking culture contribute to the relatively low numbers of serious physical incidents in the University of Kentucky population. This is not to say that incidents have not occurred. For example, one incident involved students who had been drinking and who went through the window of a building and fell. Also, driving and pedestrian deaths have occurred in the recent memory. Nonetheless, an overview the University of Kentucky campus shows that it does not pose some of the risks that have been observed on other campuses around the country.

Other positives include an obvious level of presidential commitment to the issues. During the visit, I met Doug Boyd, the president’s Chief of Staff, and Mitch Barnhardt, the Athletic Director. It was clear that both of these meetings were generated by presidential interest

in the matter (the president, unfortunately, was off campus the days of the visit). It is unusual to be able to have an audience with an athletic director and the chief of staff in one two-day visit. Also, the division of student affairs has excellent staff that is extremely committed to creating a safe and responsible student environment. Pat Terrell, Victor Hazard, and Becky Jordan — Vice President of Student Affairs, Dean of Students, and Associate Dean of Students, respectively — show a high level of commitment to creating a safe environment. In addition, Topsy Staten and Meg Quarles have proactively engaged in efforts to improve the University of Kentucky's approach to alcohol issues, and both are committed to staying at the cutting edge of technology in the field. It is not common to find people doing alcohol prevention work with their level of talent and commitment. Many campuses would be envious.

Despite some positive features of student drinking and a strong staff commitment, the University of Kentucky faces environmental challenges, which this Report addresses. One notable issue is retention. Given the University of Kentucky's prominent position in the state's educational system, the retention rates are surprisingly, and likely unnecessarily, low. It appears that a number of students come to the University of Kentucky and simply cannot handle the transition into the college environment: they either do not succeed in the first semester or do not manage to complete their degrees. The science shows a strong connection between retention and alcohol use. For example, alcohol use has been connected with increased violence, poor studying habits and poor performance on exams, tardiness and lack of attendance, feeling a lack of connection with the campus, etc. Therefore, by addressing the alcohol culture, the University of Kentucky also has an opportunity to improve retention rates.

The fact that the University of Kentucky sits at or near national and regional averages for high-risk alcohol use should not be viewed with complacency. Campus alcohol cultures can rapidly transition from average to above average in just a matter of years. Without constant and

cutting-edge attention to the issue, the University runs the risk of falling behind peer schools and finding that students who select the institution for the wrong reasons begin to dominate the population. In other words, there is a risk of adverse selection.

Increasingly, college presidents and trustee boards recognize that combating high-risk alcohol use has functionalities in terms of retention and national recognition. Many experts speculate that in the not too distant future, accrediting agencies will begin to focus more on issues of student safety and substance abuse. This change has already manifested itself in college athletics.

Next, because of the unusually high risk involved with the following matter, it deserves mention in the overview. The condition of men's housing at most modern American universities has become dangerous in terms of fire safety. Several individuals on the University of Kentucky campus commented on the poor state of some of the living facilities. In the last few years, we have seen, in colleges across the country, a series of fires that has caused significant property damage and loss of life. Thus, attention to the quality of living quarters should be a top priority for every institution.

### **III. Environmental Management**

One notable feature of the University of Kentucky campus came into focus after the site visit. The approach to risk management, and management of the high-risk alcohol culture, is largely decentralized. Much is delegated to the Department of Student Affairs and, in particular, to certain individuals within the department — Meg Quarles and Topsy Staten, in particular. Increasingly, large and small American universities are adopting a more holistic, centralized, and universal approach to risk management, and to alcohol and other drug prevention. Later sections of this Report include specific recommendations for the University with regard to particular areas and departments. The University has a tremendous opportunity to undertake a more comprehensive approach to alcohol and drug prevention — both on and off campus. Significant steps in this direction have already been taken, but there is more to achieve.

This general observation leads to several specific observations. First, modern approaches to reducing high-risk alcohol culture focus on environmental management. Environmental management is a public health concept adapted to combating high-risk alcohol use. Environmental management is the dominant approach favored by the U.S. Department of Education's Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention (HEC). The environmental management model suggests that the preferred way to reduce high-risk alcohol use by college students is to coordinate the efforts of all major functionaries — both on and off campus — who are impacted by, and can have an impact on, college students' alcohol use. Therefore, reducing high-risk alcohol use is not anyone's job in particular, but is everyone's job. Reducing high-risk alcohol use by University of Kentucky college students, therefore, involves more than just administering alcohol education, enforcing alcohol policies, etc., but requires involvement by each and every department and functionary toward that goal.

Environmental strategies have been proven effective. Several major national reports have either endorsed or recognized the efficacy and promise of environmental and coordinated strategies. Thus, a major recommendation is that the University of Kentucky adopt environmental management as a governing principle. The environmental approach is not simply a departmental policy for the division of student affairs, or for alcohol and drug educators and programmers. Instead, shifting to an environmental approach will require a general endorsement that is adopted as a university-wide policy by the president and the board of trustees. The environmental strategy should also be funded; in particular, campus and community teams need funding to be successful in their efforts to change the culture.

When an institution adopts an environmental management strategy, it is important to specifically state and identify the goals of engaging in the strategy. All too often college campuses articulate a generalized desire to address issues regarding student alcohol culture without stating specific, measurable objectives. First and foremost, the goal of an environmental management strategy should be to reduce high-risk drinking by University of Kentucky students in certain key indicators; this is a major recommendation for the University. The principal focus should be upon reducing the behavior of the frequent drinkers — as per the Core — especially heavy episodic drinkers, and to increase the number of abstainers. In lay terms, this translates to (1) increasing the number of people who do not drink at all, (2) impacting the average drinkers in the community and reducing their rates of consumption, and (3) reducing, significantly, the rates of those who consume at an extremely high rate. Under this tripartite recommendation, the University would attack on three fronts simultaneously. If the University of Kentucky is successful in achieving these goals, the overall academic and co-curricular environment will improve noticeably to virtually all members of the community.

It also is critical to set realistic and reasonable goals, and to state them in terms of scientifically achievable and measurable numbers. Efforts always should be addressed toward measurable goals; goals that are abstract or too ambitious tend to discourage proactive efforts. Even a small change in the percentage points on the key indicators can translate into significant changes in the appearance of the campus environment, retention rates, discipline rates, etc.

Another important point is to distinguish between reducing drinking patterns themselves, and reducing environmental factors that contribute to dangerous drinking or increase the risk of injury to those who drink. An environmental strategist recognizes that one can reduce injury rates to students and others simply by changing factors that themselves are not related to, or caused by, drinking. For example, in the attempt to reduce traffic fatalities caused by drunk drivers, states have enforced mandatory seatbelt laws against non-drunk drivers; these states have seen a reduction in injuries to individuals who encounter drunk drivers. Thus, the Report will include recommendations and observations that relate to both reducing drinking itself, and to reducing risky environmental factors that either contribute to drinking or enhance the risk of injury to those who are drinking or to those whom drinkers may encounter.

An additional consideration is the legal environment in Kentucky. This Report does not constitute or purport to give legal advice. Nonetheless, it is essential to consider some parameters of the legal culture within which the college alcohol culture exists. Research strongly suggests that states with significant regulation of alcohol sales and more stringent enforcement of alcohol rules and other legal rules that regulate alcohol availability, including price and consumption rules, tend to have lower overall college drinking rates. In addition, the way the campus interacts with the legal culture can set the tone for policy initiatives.

Kentucky law relating to alcohol is evolving. In addition, the law in this area is unusually complex. My general conclusion is that the law of Kentucky sits slightly below the average

compared to the way high-risk alcohol use is regulated by other state legal systems. Kentucky is not as progressive as states such as New Jersey and New York, but is not as regressive as Louisiana, Virginia, or Texas. During my visit, I encountered the perception that the law of Kentucky was unusually favorable to the alcohol industry and alcohol vendors, but this perception is not entirely supported by a review of state statutes and case decisions. Thus, a major recommendation is that the University of Kentucky engage in legal programming to combat the perception that Kentucky law unduly favors alcohol vending, provision and consumption. Perceptions of legal rules can be as important as legal reality.

Kentucky has an unusual Dram Shop Act. The Act, which sets rules for alcohol vendors, was largely in response to a critical 1987 Supreme Court of Kentucky decision, *Grayson Fraternal Order of Eagles v. Claywell*. As a result of the *Grayson* decision, and subsequent legislation, vendors in Kentucky find themselves in some respects similarly situated to vendors in other states. Yet, the Kentucky Legislature appears to have attempted to provide some relief for alcohol vendors when individuals sue vendors as a result of their own voluntary consumption. This issue continues to vex both the Kentucky court system and commentators about the Act's ultimate meaning and impact. It appears that the legislation was hastily drawn and has certain inherent ambiguities that will likely require further legislation to clarify the issues. Importantly, Kentucky law is not as clear on the issue of social host responsibility as many perceive it to be.

During my visit, I commonly heard, directly and indirectly, that Kentucky law does not provide responsibility for the social host. The Kentucky legislation is directly aimed at vendors of alcohol — dram shops. It is facially silent on the issue of social host responsibility. This issue actually was addressed in the *Grayson* case. *Grayson* did not involve social host responsibility primarily, so the issue of whether non-vendors should be responsible for

furnishing or providing alcohol was not formally decided. Nonetheless, the Court obliquely referred to the idea that responsibility for dram shops did not imply responsibility for social hosts. But again, the actual issue of social host responsibility was not presented properly to the Court. Thus, although it appears that Kentucky may protect social hosts, it is not entirely clear how the Kentucky court system will handle each and every situation involving social hosts. (In fact, the concept of a social host is actually a collection of different situations. For example, there is a difference between a high school party created by parents for graduating seniors and a workplace function, such as a holiday party, which involves alcohol. Around the country, courts have begun to distinguish among various kinds of social hosts with varying and legal results. Nationally, however, the long-standing social host protection has begun to fall.

#### **IV. Facilitator University**

Increasingly, institutions of higher education are formulating philosophical visions of college students' relationships to their institutions. Articulation of these relationships is now the norm for many institutions. To some extent, the new Student Code is a step in this direction.

A brief overview is in order. Up to the 1960's, the American college stood in the place of a parent — *in loco parentis* — to a college student. As such, articulation of the relationship between the college and the student came more in the form of action from administrators than in the form of comprehensive statements of a philosophy of education and the relationship between students and their colleges. In many ways, the relationship between the college student and the university was hardly a relationship at all — it was a “relationship” based on unilateral power by the institution over students.

In the 1960's, students won new freedoms in the civil rights era. As Professor Charles Alan Wright famously noted, the Constitution came to campus, and students gained constitutional rights at state universities like the University of Kentucky. These rights, however, were not safety rights; the rights won were principally rights of process, expression, and association. The first modern code at the University of Kentucky was born from these events.

The issue of a student's right to safety in alcohol culture was squarely presented in a series of well-known cases decided principally in the 1970's. In these cases, courts typically rejected students' claims. These same courts articulated the following vision of college students and their relationships to their colleges. First, college students are adults and therefore presumptively should be left to make their own decisions in non-academic matters. Second, alcohol use by college students is uncontrollable; thus, all alcohol prevention efforts are essentially pointless and ineffective. Third, college drinking is to be expected and is a natural

right of passage in the socialization of drinking, or, put another way, college is the best place for students to learn to drink.

As a result, from a legal perspective, the most dangerous course of action for an institution was to assume duties to students that were not owed in the first place. Thus was born the notorious era of the “bystander university.” In this era, off-campus behavior was virtually never regulated, except by schools with strong religious or military affiliations, and attitudes toward the alcohol culture became *laissez faire*.

Beginning in the 1980’s, and accelerating in the 1990’s and beyond, American law has taken an interesting turn away from “bystander” principles. The three assumptions that courts articulated during the bystander era have been refuted or proven false by scientific research. In other words, the 1970’s cases were wrong.

First, college students are not all fully developed adults. Instead, traditional college students are still in the process of developing into mature adults. For example, studies of the brain indicate that college students are at risk for brain damage from using alcohol. More obviously, students, especially freshmen, are in a liminal phase between childhood and adulthood and require some level of intervention to assist them in that developmental process.

Second, recent empirical studies conclusively demonstrate that the alcohol culture is not impervious to programming. Indeed, authoritative national reports have highlighted many effective strategies to reduce alcohol use and the dangerous effects that come with it. Judges of the 1970’s incorrectly assumed that the alcohol culture was impervious to change; their assumption that the failure of prohibition implied the failure of efforts to reduce and manage the alcohol culture was simply wrong. While prohibition is not a realistic goal, reducing high-risk alcohol use and its negative effects is achievable.

Third, social mores regarding college alcohol use have radically changed. In the 1970's, and even the 1980's, college alcohol use was often romanticized. Now, the harsh effects of college alcohol use have gained the public's attention. College drinking is no longer universally accepted. Consider, for example, the incredibly unflattering portrayal of college alcohol culture in the new book by Tom Wolfe, *I Am Charlotte Simmons*. Moreover, the public has become increasingly aware of physical risks to college students, including the prominent deaths of college students. The public also is increasingly aware that college is not the place where students learn to drink; to the contrary, drinking often begins in the pre-teen era and accelerates to alarming proportions by high school. Thus, in large measure, college students have brought their drinking to college. As a result, college is not necessarily a place to learn how to drink, but instead is a place where the limitations that existed in the high school and pre-high school environment are lifted, which can result in excessive and dangerous patterns of behavior.

Recognizing that the assumptions of the 1970's have been refuted or have been proven false, modern American law has begun to encourage colleges to manage high-risk alcohol culture. Several notable decisions from high courts of conservative jurisdictions reflect a strong trend to alter bystander principles. In addition, recent developments demonstrate that responsibility for student injury can extend to foreseeable danger in and around the campus environment. The new focus is on providing a reasonable amount of care to address risks — not all possible care. As such, geography has become less important than foreseeability. Consequently, colleges have started to use science-based approaches to reduce and manage risk on and off campus.

Changes in the legal and social climate regarding college alcohol culture suggest that an alternative philosophical vision of student affairs, and the relationship between the college and students, is needed. The college cannot turn the clock back to the era of parental control, nor can

the college afford to step back and disengage as in the 1970's. Instead, a college must adopt a coherent vision of student development, risk management, alcohol prevention, and legal and business responsibility.

A major recommendation of this Report is that the University of Kentucky adopt the Facilitator Model developed in *The Rights and Responsibilities of the Modern University* by Robert D. Bickel and Peter F. Lake, or adopt an alternative model based on a campus-wide inquiry into the values and perspectives of the University of Kentucky campus. The Facilitator Model sees typical college students as neither children nor fully formed adults. Thus, students are in an important final phase in their development, which in turn requires a special developmental and educational perspective to promote a sound and safe educational environment.

The core notion is that the university should attempt to use reasonable care to create conditions under which students will make responsible choices for themselves. Unlike the era of *in loco parentis*, in which the university presumed to choose for students, the Facilitator Model understands that the safest and best overall approach is to empower students to choose for themselves. At this stage in their development, students are typically in the best position to make the best choices for their own safety.

Recognizing that sharing responsibility with students does not mean shouldering all responsibility for them, it is important to accept that student choices are made in an environment that is often largely beyond their control. For example, students — in the limited time they are on campus — have little ability to change circumstances like the quality of residential living, the enforcement of alcohol policies, the nature and extent of the Greek system, etc. Thus, universities should work to create conditions under which the environmental factors that influence student choices are reasonably managed to encourage better and safer choices. Thus,

the Facilitator Model is at once a safety and risk management model, and an educational tool.

This recommendation goes hand-in-hand with the recommendation that the University of Kentucky adopt the environmental management approach. A Facilitator University naturally looks to identify environmental factors that influence student choices, and it simultaneously recognizes that students are choosing agents within that environment.

The Facilitator Model is perhaps the fastest growing risk management/student development model in American higher education at this time. A number of schools have adopted the Facilitator Model as their official policy, and many others have been influenced by the model when developing policy. Schools that use the Facilitator Model have seen significant success in reducing high-risk alcohol use and attendant harms. For example, Arizona State University has adopted a pro-active risk management strategy largely based on facilitator concepts. That school reports that the litigation rate and the injury rate are lower than at sister schools in the Arizona system.

It is not essential that the University of Kentucky adopt the Facilitator Model; however, it is essential that the University consider its philosophical perspective on its relationship to the students, and articulate that philosophy and manifest it in policy and approach.

The Facilitator Model is very culture specific. Therefore, it is essential that the Facilitator Model not simply be imposed; instead, it should be developed from the ground up within the institution. Implementing any philosophical perspective must be a *process* — the process of educating people that each individual choice connects to many other individual choices, which, in turn, builds a network of connection and empowerment that coordinates approaches to risk. High-risk alcohol problems become less intransigent. Often, student affairs professionals and other members of a campus community feel de-facilitated; they feel completely un-empowered and like their decisions and choices have absolutely no, or only a

limited, impact on the greater environment. Creating empowerment is critical to moving a system to better and safer horizons.

## **V. Observations and Recommendations**

### **1. Alcohol and other drug prevention**

Alcohol and other drug prevention efforts at the University of Kentucky are primarily situated in the student affairs areas, which is a fairly typical place for universities to locate such efforts. Nonetheless, universities are beginning to recognize that alcohol and drug prevention is not just the responsibility of those whose primary job is to do alcohol and drug programming and education. In this sense, the work of Meg Quarels and Topsy Staten, in particular, is somewhat compartmentalized. Prevention is seen as primarily *their* job. This approach has certain weaknesses. For one thing, it creates a sense of balkanization for those who are principally responsible for alcohol and drug programming. Individuals assigned such roles can find themselves negotiating with the larger university community for prevention goals. As a result, alcohol and drug prevention becomes just another factor in a multi-dimensional equation with various forces contending for control and asserting competing goals. In this type of environment, prevention tends to get drowned out.

The University of Kentucky has taken significant steps toward alcohol and other drug prevention. For example, the University has administered the Core survey. In addition, the University has undertaken a social norming campaign. Moreover, the University has made an effort to present information at summer orientation and in parent materials. (However, there has been some hesitancy in terms of giving space and time for these efforts.) Basics and Choices programs have been used. In addition, the University has used reports from experts in the field to assist in program development.

The Division of Student Affairs as a whole appears to understand concepts of environmental management and other leading scientific perspectives on alcohol and drug prevention. Unlike some schools that have a primitive alcohol and drug prevention system, the University of Kentucky has committed personnel with the knowledge and skills to introduce and implement a variety of strategies. These personnel are a significant asset to the school and in some ways distinguish the University from peer institutions. The personnel and their skill sets are will help the University advance to the next level.

Nonetheless, the alcohol and other drug prevention area has not been emphasized — or funded — to the extent it could and should be, especially given the relatively small costs involved in gaining advantages in this area. As just one example, although Core survey data has been collected, the University of Kentucky would benefit by having the survey administered more regularly and tailored in a way that samples particular populations. The University should have data generated and reviewed specifically with its unique environment in mind.

Specifically, many students leave campus on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday to go home. Both this population, and the population that stays behind, should be studied distinctly to determine each group's drinking habits and patterns. In the current data, the groups seem to be mixed together, which makes it difficult to determine the rates of use for either group. It is likely that those who regularly remain drink at higher rates than those who do not.

Moreover, the University has a distinct, and unusually well organized and vocal non-drinking community that sets it apart from many institutions. It would be valuable to study this group and to further examine its values. Again, it is possible that University of Kentucky's high-risk alcohol issues are concentrated in those who remain on campus most of the week, and in those who abstain irregularly. If this is true, programming efforts can be directed at those specific populations.

The University also should both continue and improve the social norming it has started. Social norming, in its most basic form, is an approach based on marketing theory. The lessons learned in commercial environments show that identifying values can help to market certain ideas better and to diminish the power of other ideas. Social norms research often reveals that a college does not have the actual drinking patterns that the majority of individuals perceive.

Perception in many ways is reality on American college campuses, and many perceptions are false and can be corrected. Significant empirical research has shown the efficacy of appropriately designed social norming campaigns. In some cases, when coupled with other environmental efforts, radical changes in college drinking environments can occur. The most common variable in change is that students begin to perceive the norm and begin to tailor actual drinking patterns toward a safer, true norm.

The University of Kentucky has undertaken an alcohol-industry-initiated social norms campaign. The industry offered seed money and very limited technical support to start a social norms campaign. Administrators have endeavored to keep the campaign going, but have been forced to do this — because of limited financial support and lack of a broad appreciation for the potential benefit — without necessary technical support. Social norming only should be done with professional technical design and longitudinal support. Social norming can be very effective, and the University of Kentucky environment has positives to emphasize. But research suggests that an inappropriately designed or implemented social norming program may backfire and rebound to the advantage of the individuals in the campus environment who wish to promote negative alcohol behaviors. Thus, a major recommendation is for the University of Kentucky to engage the services of a national social norms practitioner with a marketing background and education at the Ph.D. level to undertake a significant, long-term, and sustained social norms campaign to reduce misperceptions in the campus environment. Because my visit showed

numerous instances where perceptions seemed to drive the campus environment, social norming conducted by an experienced professional holds tremendous opportunity for the University.

It bears repeating that social norms programming works best in the context of an overall environmental strategy. Therefore, it would be a mistake to assume that social norming is a panacea in and of itself. Although some social norms theorists perceive that a well-tailored social norms program can itself lead to significant reduction in alcohol and other drug use, most disagree with this belief.

The good news is that a solid, long-term social norms campaign does not necessarily require a long-term financial outlay. While social norming programs are not free or entirely inexpensive, they certainly dwarf the costs associated with even one legal case.

A concern that arose during the visit was a lack of opportunity — mostly in terms of time allotted — for alcohol and drug programmers to have the desired impact on parents with information sessions held during orientation and pre-freshmen programs. While University prevention specialists have had success in speaking to parents and students in and around orientation, clear resistance exists to providing too much time or information in the pre-admission and orientation processes. More than once, I heard individuals in the University of Kentucky community say that too much information about alcohol or drug issues on campus would lead parents to ask why they were sending their children to the University of Kentucky in the first place, and that providing this information might give parents the wrong impression about the University.

The limited amount of time afforded with parents and students, coupled with a small budget for publications, can result in only a modest prevention impact. A good example is the *Insider's Guide for New UK Parents 2004-2005*, a publication that I received during my visit. This *Guide* is very handy and features a professional level of production quality. For many

purposes, it is an excellent publication. Unfortunately, from a prevention standpoint, the *Guide* requires further work.

In the future, the *Guide* should be developed in connection with a social norms professional. I fear that the document, in its current form, may not help to reduce high-risk alcohol use, and may indeed disserve that goal. Attention to alcohol and drug issues — the number one risk factor to college students — essentially begins at page eleven. That page contains a glossy color photograph of three young ladies that says “Party Smart.” This presentation will likely send the wrong message, and should be considered carefully by the social norms professional. Text here regarding alcohol and drug issues begins on page twelve and continues to page thirteen. The entire brochure is twenty-three pages long. The last page also contains another “Party Smart” ad. In addition, the brochure’s table of contents does not refer directly to alcohol issues. This omission is surprising because alcohol use correlates highly with virtually every major negative outcome on campus.

The limited text devoted to alcohol use is obviously designed to put a positive face on the University of Kentucky alcohol culture. Most students, and some parents (the target audience), would not read the *Guide* as a sincere statement of campus reality; indeed, many would already know a great deal about the alcohol culture from visits, friends, family, and other information sources. Both pages twelve and thirteen contain pictures of young women who are smiling and happy. Oddly, these pages picture only one man to the six women. I use the term “oddly,” because men drink more heavily than women at the University. Women, of course, are at high risk in college alcohol culture, and suffer inordinate amounts of sexual abuse, harassment, etc. But all six women pictured are smiling and happy, which may send the message that alcohol is a fairly insignificant issue.

Much of the information in the two pages relates to the law in Kentucky and FERPA, the latter of which allows parental notification.<sup>1</sup> This is the sort of information printed on consumer products that no one reads; it tends to cause readers to tune out and to regard the University's approach to alcohol issues as one of minimal legal compliance, not risk management.

Discussion of alcohol also appears obliquely in two other places in the *Guide*. First, page twelve under a wellness heading in the second column includes a brief reference to "avoiding problems with alcohol." The sentence is difficult to read and should be edited. It would be wise to include information about what problems exist, how to avoid them, and what the connections are to academic success.

Second, the *Guide* indicates that students lessen the chance of being *a victim of a crime* if "they maintain low-risk drinking behaviors." This may be the most helpful tip in the *Guide*, as it defines what low-risk means in this context. Nonetheless, consistent with the overall tone of watering down alcohol issues, this section glaringly omits the fact that drinking increases the likelihood that a student will be a perpetrator of a crime or will be involved in other criminal or non-criminal legal trouble. Students often lose, or negatively impact, graduate-school admission, military service, employment, credit, and other opportunities because of alcohol use. In addition, parents often learn about these consequences the hard way because they are not aware of the connections with alcohol use. This information--in some form-- should be included in future versions of the *Guide*.

For prevention purposes, the *Guide* needs a complete redesign. The revised *Guide* should feature high-risk alcohol use a major topic. At a minimum, the revised *Guide* also should

- integrate the treatment of alcohol issues into each and every relevant topic in a substantial, prominent, readable, and complete manner;

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<sup>1</sup>The information on page twelve of the brochure is not a correct statement of the law regarding FERPA.

- provide information that will alert parents to specific risks their children will face, and should include information about strategies and support if intervention becomes necessary;
- ensure that all statements of law are current, accurate, meaningful, and readable;
- include images that more accurately reflect the realities of the University of Kentucky environment;
- provide additional information for and about abstainers and dry-event preferring student populations, and describe how a student can connect to those populations;
- address the role of Greek life.

While it is important in a social norming campaign to stress the positives in an environment, it is appropriate in a brochure to parents — which also will likely be read by incoming students — to emphasize the real risks that students face, especially with regard to retention and safety. Again, alcohol issues should be more fully integrated throughout the *Guide*, including with various other issues such as campus safety on page twelve and student transition and success on page eleven. The brochure simply does not alert parents and other readers that retention is heavily affected by high-risk alcohol use. Sadly, a large number of parents who read the brochure will see their children leave the University during the first year.

A much better, if very limited, document for wellness and prevention is a calendar titled “Seasons of Adjustment: A Parent’s Guide to the First Year Experience August 2004 – July 2005.” This solid publication provides a wealth of specific wellness and success information for parents. Indeed, much of this information deserves to be included in the *Guide*. The calendar is both a resource for parents and a helpful checklist and reminder for parents regarding various things they can do with and for their children. Sadly, this publication is slated to be discontinued. At the very least, the information contained in the calendar should be incorporated

prominently in the revised *Guide*, or in a similar document. The University might also reconsider its decision to discontinue the calendar.

On another point, it would be helpful for the alcohol and drug prevention specialists to do more to educate the community. One strategy would involve condensing scientific sources, such as the NIAAA reports and the recent Institute of Medicine Report, and disseminate that information on campus in the form of executive summaries. To some extent, this has already occurred. For alcohol and drug prevention efforts to succeed, it is important to provide the larger community with current scientific developments and evidence to reinforce the fact that science exists to manage high-risk alcohol behavior. Persistent efforts here will work best.

In addition, as leaders in the campus community coalition (specific recommendations regarding the coalition appear in subsection 5), the alcohol and drug prevention specialists should continue to actively consider each specific recommendation contained in reports like the Institute of Medicine Report and the NIAAA reports to determine whether those recommendations are relevant to the University of Kentucky environment. To a large extent, this also has occurred. There may be a need, however, to more systematically integrate science into the campus community coalition meetings.

There is also some reluctance to use safe-ride programs. The safe-ride issue has vexed a number of college campuses over the last two decades. The recent scientific evidence strongly suggests that appropriately designed safe-ride programs help to prevent injuries associated with high-risk alcohol use. Thus, to some extent, the debate over safe-rides is coming to an end. However, safe-ride programs should be implemented only if they can comply with appropriate standards. For example, simply instituting a safe-ride program without proper training, resources, and equipment could easily lead to a new variety of injuries and dangers that did not previously exist. Thus, the safe-ride program, at a minimum, should feature appropriate

vehicles, trained drivers, and a system in which drivers can get immediate assistance if they need it. For example, some individuals who take safe-rides either become dangerously ill or violent. With appropriate training, equipment, and assistance, drivers will be better able to protect themselves and other passengers in these circumstances.

A great deal of drinking in the University of Kentucky environment occurs at parties held in houses on and near campus; students tend to walk to and from these parties. As a result, pedestrian risk — by vehicular incident and falling — is a primary danger. This danger leads to the following recommendation: the University should institute and expand programs of training and regulation for pedestrians, and should consider better pedestrian safety technologies. This spring, the University instituted a PAWS program for greater pedestrian safety. This program should be expanded and linked directly to alcohol prevention efforts. Unfortunately, the University of Kentucky community has suffered pedestrian accidents already, including a fatal train incident in August 2005. The University should focus more prevention efforts on intoxicated or impaired walkers.

Increasingly, colleges are recognizing that the first year, especially the very early part of the first year, is a very high-risk period both for safety and retention. The University of Kentucky has taken valuable steps by working with the nation's leading expert on the first-year experience. The University should encourage the expansion of specific programming — such as UK 101 and living-learning communities — designed principally for first-semester and first-year students. The University might also consider creating the position of Dean of First-Year Students, as several schools have done.

The University of Kentucky employs various educational programs, including programs for parents and a Choices program taught by trained student affairs professionals, including Becky Jordan. All national scientific evidence recognizes that education is a significant

component of any good environmental prevention model. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that education alone, without sufficient support in the environment, is not likely to change drinking rates or patterns in any significant way. The temptation exists to turn issues of alcohol and drug use into issues of education and personal choice. As indicated earlier, that approach is a “last generation” approach to these issues. We now recognize that alcohol and drug use is not entirely an individual’s personal choice; instead, many choices made by other individuals in the community affect overall use and danger. Educational efforts should be continued and expanded, especially with regard to parent education. More funding is appropriate. For example, there should be sufficient resources to expand the use of AlcoholEdu.

An additional issue about alcohol and drug prevention concerns tailgating. Virtually everyone in the community regards tailgating as a prime symbolic issue on campus. The University of Kentucky campus is technically dry; nonetheless, alumni events, especially tailgating at games, feature alcohol in significant quantities. The University of Kentucky police force has adapted to provide excellent protection at the major events. But there is a contradiction in the messages being sent to students. Also, alcohol and drug prevention specialists are virtually — and strangely — powerless on the tailgating issue.

Tailgating must be addressed more directly to create the appropriate response. I recommend that the president create a commission to study the issue and to prepare a report and recommendations about tailgating. While most college traditions do not evolve as safety customs, tailgating presents unique dangers, and some campuses have curtailed or eliminated the practice. Whether to limit or eliminate tailgating will require the balancing of many factors, but if the University of Kentucky continues its current tailgating traditions, it must consider ways to manage the alcohol and drug risks, and the images that are sent to the greater campus environment.

Change in this area is unlikely to occur simply upon the urging of alcohol and drug professionals, or even by principals in the division of student affairs. Change here requires presidential initiative.

A common complaint on the modern college campus is the lack of alternative activities. A significant minority of students at the University of Kentucky are abstainers who want alternative programming. An even larger group of individuals — drinkers — state a preference for non-alcohol events. The recent development of “Wildcat Wild Nights,” a program designed to offer alternative programming on roughly a program-a-month basis, demonstrates student interest in non-alcohol events.

The University might also consider keeping athletic and dining facilities open much later into the night and adopting flex-time practices that bring staff to work in during a second or even third shift. Other options include encouraging students to adopt less vampire-like tendencies by scheduling classes earlier, or much later, and on the weekends. A key to alternative programming is to invade the space and time that has been reserved for high-risk alcohol culture. With traditional programming and course schedules, colleges have created blocks of time and space for students to coagulate into risky drinking groups. Alternative programming breaks up these blocks.

These proposals involve potentially significant costs. However, it is worth considering a more radical approach to alternative programming that might also impact retention. Students who do not want to participate in alcohol culture at its current level of intensity on campus either choose to go home or find themselves alienated, or bored. “Wildcat Wild Nights” seems like a promising step in a better direction.

In conclusion, the University’s alcohol and drug prevention staff is very high quality and is highly motivated, but has been marginalized. Much of the responsibility for alcohol and drug

issues has been delegated to a handful of professionals, and prevention has not been generalized campus wide. Moreover, this area is under-funded. This lack of funding has caused the inability to generate more helpful statistical information. In addition, the prevention staff has been asked to do jobs that require the help of highly trained and experienced specialists. Despite the challenges, there is significant room and opportunity for improving risk management and alcohol and drug prevention. The campus also seems receptive to making prevention systematic. But, achieving these goals likely will require presidential leadership and trustee support.

## **2. Judicial affairs**

During my visit, I had a long and productive meeting with Tony Blanton in judicial affairs. Mr. Blanton was extremely helpful in illustrating how the University of Kentucky's discipline system operates. He is a well-trained, highly professional individual who administers the code in a fairly traditional way. I did not detect that he views his role as primarily one that is environmental; others in the community perceive that judicial affairs is not committed to environmental management.

It is very important that the administration of judicial affairs have as a primary goal the environmental goal of risk reduction, especially as it relates to alcohol use. As of now, it does not appear that this is more than an incidental goal. This situation is due in part to the lack of a truly modern student code.

The University of Kentucky, until early July 2005, had one of the most antiquated judicial systems in the United States. The former code was basically the same code that was initially adopted in the 1960's in response to court decisions that required colleges to have some form of discipline process to comply with legal due process requirements.

The new code is definitely better, but is still not as modern as it needs to be. For instance, the new code provides for some level of delegation in rule-making, but unnecessarily

and unfortunately still requires trustee approval of all changes. Requiring trustee approval will allow for only glacial pace of change. It is unusual in American colleges for a trustee board to retain this level of day-to-day management. Although code-making power comes under general trustee authority, it is far more common to delegate such power of supervision to a college, its faculty, and/or a college president. A system of specific trustee governance is destined to give the code little ability to respond to the ever-mutating alcohol and drug culture.

For example, the new code finally — after long consideration — extends judicial power off campus, but does so only if certain nexus-to-campus requirements are met. The nexus limitations in the new code are far too limited to do meaningful environmental work; the nexus limitations look like the product of compromise, not prevention or risk management. The University has the legal right to do more off campus, but has backed off for some reason. Safety is not a matter of compromise. The code already needs to be revisited from a prevention viewpoint — but the current revision process guarantees that this will take years, if it happens at all. It is likely that a tort injury case will force this change. The University's legal responsibility to its students and others extends potentially beyond the nexus requirements of the new code, which means that the University is disabled from regulating that for which it may be held responsible. Although this scenario involves speculation, it has happened at similarly situated colleges.

Accordingly, a major recommendation is that the University of Kentucky promptly consider a more streamlined process for modifying and revising the code. The recent revisions make the code much better. But the larger issue of trustee management remains. The University needs not only to improve the code revision procedures, but should re-examination of the roles of the president, trustee board, and college. The business management model of the University is out of step with modern approaches to higher education board governance. A higher education

management expert — and there are several excellent candidates — would help to improve the management approach.

Many schools tend to draft codes of student conduct in very legalistic ways. While the new code purports to be less legalistic, it unfortunately is still very legalistic. The new code bears the handprints of lawyers and legalists. A helpful exercise would be to rewrite the code using no legal language whatsoever. The University would do well to govern itself in higher education terms, rather than legal terms, and the small steps taken in the new code are to be applauded.

Another issue that emerged during the visit relates to the three-strikes process. (Interestingly, few students make it all the way to the third strike.) In mechanical or mandatory systems, administrators tend to under-prosecute. Moreover, three-strike policies have some serious drawbacks. A foolish student caught three times with an open container could be subject to suspension or dismissal while a more calculating offender who provides alcohol for a variety of underage individuals may escape detection. Thus, bad actors may flourish while hapless individuals are expelled. The three-strike system, therefore, is both under-inclusive and over-inclusive.

Moreover, it is critical, in combating high-risk alcohol use, to emphasize and target facilitating and enabling offenses. Therefore, an individual with an open container, a noise violation, or an altercation, may not be as culpable as an individual who distributes alcohol to underage students. This technique illustrates a more environmental approach.

Closely related to the three-strikes rule is the well-known Lexington Area Party Plan regarding houses that are caught violating local ordinances. Although collective or household responsibility should be pursued further, students have become adroit at avoiding the labeling of a house as a party house. If a house garners an infraction, students simply move the party to another location that has not yet had an infraction or met threshold levels for being labeled a

party house. The Plan has thus been circumvented by the students and has not adapted to meet the obvious patterns of roving parties. This problem could be dealt with either by a city ordinance, judicial policy, or both. The Plan was a result of efforts in the coalition, but the circumvention problem demonstrates the need for more resources to be devoted to the coalition, and for rapidly adaptable rule systems.

One feature of the campus rule system regarding alcohol is to send first offenders to the Choices program. The Choices program has a heavy connection to the discipline process. This program would benefit from being more widely available to the campus community.

On many American campuses, rules relating to alcohol are often stated in various instruments and administered by various entities. It has become common to divide responsibility for dealing with incidents involving alcohol; the division is often among the judicial system, Greek life, athletics, and the residence life system. The University of Kentucky is no exception, even after the recent code revision. Thus, a student may face sanctions in both the judicial system and the residence life system, or neither. In addition, many alcohol-related incidents are handled informally in the residence life process, and this will likely continue. A divided system is not an effective a risk management system for alcohol and related risks.

Therefore, I recommend that the University of Kentucky unify its alcohol policies and have one central system that covers all incidents related to or involving alcohol. The revised code does not do this; instead, it encourages multiple policies and various enforcement mechanisms. Having several policies and organizations that deal with alcohol issues creates confusion, misunderstanding, and inconsistency. The University needs an integrated system for dealing with alcohol and drug issues.

### **3. Parents**

The University has some good programming directed at parents regarding alcohol. However, according to one parent group leader, the perception is that alcohol prevention work is performed by only a handful of individuals at the University. Some parents also sense that the University lacks a comprehensive, system-wide plan to address alcohol issues, apart from anti-alcohol rules.

Parents thus appear to be a group that can be better utilized in prevention issues. More coordinated and clearly stated objectives regarding alcohol issues, and an emphasis on actual information regarding student alcohol use, should help motivate parents to be more involved and to be more of a positive force in the community.

### **4. Student affairs**

Pat Terrell and Victor Hazard, leaders in the division of student affairs, are well-trained, highly motivated individuals who are extremely attentive to alcohol and drug issues. They spoke of certain recurring issues, including events permitting alcohol, such as game day, and the pressure from the community to extend and enforce the University of Kentucky's rules off campus. Both are aware and proud of the Genesis Group and the large number of abstainers on campus. Both recognized Thursday as a huge party night, and that more late-night programming would be useful to combat high-risk drinking patterns. With respect to parents, they recognize that parents generally accept their students' drinking patterns as long as students do not drive; parents assume that the highest risk of drinking is driving accidents and have little recognition of pedestrian safety issues and other related safety problems created by alcohol and drug use. (Parents' perceptions reinforce some of the concerns regarding the *Guide*).

One issue that became manifest was the sometimes strained relationship between administration and student government. Student government, which is mostly dominated by

Greeks, has recently come into some conflict with the administration. Student groups seem to be asserting levels of independence that are inconsistent with their relationship at the University of Kentucky. Almost everyone on campus was able to identify one student who seemed to be at the center of many of the issues.

There is frustration with the process to revise the student code. Alcohol policies have been under review, but the pace of change has been slow. All reported a good working relationship with legal counsel, but acknowledged that, over the years, relationships between student affairs professionals and legal counsel have not always been as interactive as possible, or as they are now.

Student affairs professionals recognized that alcohol and drug issues are principally located in student affairs. Strategic efforts to reduce alcohol and drug use on the University of Kentucky campus ultimately locate there. Although student affairs needs to continue to take a lead role in promoting safer and more responsible behavior, it is essential that this division gain support and assistance from other divisions on campus in a coordinated way. As it stands, student affairs plays a complicated game of attempting to balance interests with the community, the faculty, the students, and other groups on campus.

## **5. Campus community coalition**

The University of Kentucky has a very active campus community coalition that meets regularly throughout the year. This is amazing because the group is now without funding (an initial and modest grant kicked the program off). The group is fairly large with stakeholders from various perspectives in and around the University of Kentucky campus. The campus community coalition is one feature of an environmental management strategy. Research suggests that communities that have strong ties to the campus, and that meet regularly with campus leaders, implement more effective strategies to reduce high-risk alcohol use. This

group's existence and its efforts are to be applauded; the group should continue to exist and deserves immediate funding.

The University of Kentucky's campus community coalition demonstrates an impressive level of development. Among other things, the coalition understood of scientific issues and initiatives. The coalition has been programmed well and is at a national level of competency.

The University of Kentucky uses the campus community coalition as the primary vehicle for collaborative efforts. What would serve the interests of the University of Kentucky even further would be to have an active campus risk coalition that meets regularly, and then to connect that group to the campus community coalition. This new group, which should be smaller than the campus community coalition, should meet at least every other week, and preferably weekly. Members of this campus team should include representatives from student affairs, preferably Terrell or Hazard; members of the Alcohol and Drug Team, preferably Quarles or Staten; and members of the campus police force, residence life, judicial affairs, admissions, and legal offices. The team should gather and share information about the campus community and devise solutions to problems as they develop. This is a different focus and charge from the current coalition. Thus, a major recommendation is that the University form a campus risk team that features key stakeholders and that is charged with addressing high-risk behavior, especially alcohol-related behavior, as it arises and evolves.

Pieces of this new team already exist on the University of Kentucky campus, so this recommendation is really nothing other than a further step in the direction that the University already has taken. The new team would contain some members from the existing campus community coalition.

Forming another administrators' group is no small matter on a campus of the size and complexity of the University of Kentucky. However, a small amount of coordinated effort can

generate time-saving solutions. For example, there was consistent reference to one individual who appears to affect virtually everyone in the campus community. Various actors appear to be addressing issues raised by this individual from the perspective of their departments or charges. A coordinated approach could be more effective and would provide information-sharing opportunities that would assist other operations to meet challenges more effectively.

## **6. President**

Unfortunately, I was unable to meet with the president during my two-day visit. I was, however, able to meet with Doug Boyd, the president's chief of staff, who was helpful.

It is clear that the president is concerned about alcohol use on the University of Kentucky campus. The president's concern for this issue is evident in allowing me an audience with his chief of staff for a significant period of time, and with other members of the campus community who are extremely difficult to meet under ordinary circumstances. No doubt, the president has made clear to senior administrators the importance of alcohol issues on the campus.

Nonetheless, as I met with various constituencies in the community, I consistently received information that the perception was that the president was not clear on issues of alcohol prevention. Some pointed to inconsistencies in the alcohol policies and the availability of alcohol at alumni functions and football games. Others, including student groups, have the unfortunate impression that the president is more concerned with image and litigation than student safety. This is not consistent with the emphasis on prevention that I detected coming from the president's office. Thus, a major recommendation is that the president's office engage in the program suggested by the HEC in accordance with the "Be Vocal, Be Visible, Be Visionary" protocol.

Therefore, I propose that Meg Quarles and/or Topsy Staten create an executive summary for the president that explains key features of the approach and includes specific

recommendations about how the president may implement the protocol. Presidential leadership is essential, and it is clear that negative opinion leaders on campus have created an image of the president that is not consistent with the presidential emphasis placed on reducing high-risk alcohol use. By actively engaging the issue, the president can show that he is fully committed to the issue both personally and professionally. This is a relatively easy step, and likely involves some publications under the president's signature along with key appearances at select alcohol and drug programming events. It is essential that the president keep the message alive and be clear and persistent in offering the message.

## **7. Residence life**

I spent an extended session with the Director of Residence Life, who was very helpful.

Several members of the University of Kentucky campus community had commented negatively on certain living arrangements for students. Certain freshman facilities, and men's houses in particular, drew negative comments from various sources. (Of course, some of the housing is not provided directly through the residence life office.) In addition, certain facilities have been hotbeds for the development of high-risk alcohol and other dangerous behaviors; in particular, one freshman housing program seems to have caused a number of problems.

A serious problem involves maintenance and repair. I became greatly concerned, after meeting with the Director, that the system currently in place leaves open the possibility of dangerous time lags between report and repair. As reported, the Residence Life Director does not have unilateral authority to authorize and pay for all repairs, but requires input from other administrators who allocate funds for repairs. Although the Director can request repairs, and often does get them done fairly quickly, the bifurcation of authority and funding is dangerous. Apparently, this approach developed through administrative reorganization, without the specific focus on student safety, and alcohol and other drug prevention.

It is critical that repairs and upkeep continue to be completed in a timely fashion. Certain living arrangements can deteriorate and become fire hazards or breeding grounds for high-risk alcohol use. There is a strong belief in the order maintenance community that “fixing broken windows” is essential to creating an environment that does not facilitate crime, disorder, or alcohol and drug use. In addition, lack of lighting, maintenance of shrubs, fire safety matters, etc. can easily give rise to an injury.

Thus, a major recommendation is that the University of Kentucky consider streamlining the process of allocating repair and maintenance funds so that, at a minimum, the Residence Life Director has significant discretionary funds to effect all safety- and risk-related repairs immediately.

The Director described several housing challenges that the University of Kentucky has been faced with in recent memory, including some issues with freshman housing. The University is taking steps to address some of these issues.

To create an adequate residence assistants corps, the residence life group provides significant training to resident assistants. These RAs are typically not professional RAs; they are usually students. A move to incorporate more professional RAs, especially in freshman living arrangements, would be a good move. For example, the Director reports that RAs typically do not suffer bullying, harassment, boycotting, and other similar ills typically encountered by RAs in other schools. This could be due to the fact that the RAs have been co-opted significantly by the very alcohol culture that they are charged to protect against in the dorms. There are also concerns that RAs under-report alcohol issues.

On the other hand, RAs are well trained in crisis intervention; they are trained in how to identify alcohol poisoning and when to seek professional assistance. Campus police appear to be well integrated with this system, with one caveat. Most American campuses suffer, as the

University of Kentucky does, with the problem of how to handle individuals who are significantly intoxicated but are not at specific medical risk. EMTs may respond to an incident, but withdraw from rendering further services once an individual is determined not to be medically at risk. Transports to hospitals are not as common as leave-behinds.

At the University, the question of how to handle individuals who are significantly intoxicated and possibly at risk of danger over the period of detoxifying has not been answered sufficiently. RAs may look in on individuals or enlist the support of other residents who monitor an intoxicated individual. Likely, this response will need to evolve into a more systematic and coordinated approach in which key individuals are better trained. The University also should consider ways to quarantine and/or monitor individuals who become significantly intoxicated. Without proper assistance, intoxicated students may suffer injury or death.

The residence life system has its own alcohol rules, and many alcohol violations are effectively dealt with as residence life violations. As suggested above, this system should be better coordinated with the general discipline system.

In sum, issues of inadequate housing, disrepair, etc., have not been systematically viewed as alcohol issues. In addition, residence life must be on the front lines of combating high-risk alcohol use. Accordingly, more emphasis should be placed on this critical area for prevention.

## **8. Students**

During my visit, I met with the Genesis Group and Greek student leaders. The students and Greek leaders were very candid and extremely helpful in illustrating campus culture. From these meetings, several observations emerged.

First, Greek groups and Greek leaders play a dominant role in both student government and party culture. While not all parties are Greek, Greek groups are the most organized, powerful, and purposeful groups in the campus community.

Second, students painted a picture of college life as a “last hurrah.” Consistently, students voiced images of life radically changing after college. Statements to the effect that “college is the last time to have fun” were common. Students spoke of having to create a life following college that would involve settling down, achieving success, getting respect and being respectable, and having a family. Most students seem to regard these as inevitable transitions in life, and few seemed as excited about their future as they did about their present. Alcohol industry imaging has been incredibly successful in creating the image of college as the last stage in the life of the Aztec god. From popular culture, young people receive the image that peak experiences occur at or about the time of college, at which point interest passes to the next generation of young people. These beliefs fuel an intense alcohol culture. Thus, the University should consider social norming and other programming designed to defeat the image of college as the last time of conviviality, and programming designed to promote images of a desirable post-college life.

Third, students spoke of an aggressive sex and alcohol culture. “Hooking up” while severely intoxicated is a common and accepted mode of behavior. Interestingly, and sadly, students reported a large number of sexual encounters that have occurred when consent was, at best, ambiguous. Choices by both parties are heavily influenced by social pressure and alcohol.

In some cases, allegations of rape or sexual misconduct fly the morning after an intoxicated sexual encounter. Many women in the student group openly stated that other women concoct stories of sexual misconduct for various reasons; they suggested that men are often victimized by false allegations. This strangely contradicts crime statistics that demonstrate women in this age group are victimized by harassment, sexual abuse, rape, etc., in inordinate numbers. While some females may remorsefully concoct stories the morning after, it is also

likely that the mores of the community — or the perceived mores of the community — sometimes pressure students into sexual contact, and excuse misconduct too readily.

Interestingly, many men responded to concerns about the treatment of women in the culture. Many did not feel comfortable with the way some women are characterized by their peers. Nonetheless, they reported feeling pressured to go along with macho imagery and derogatory language regarding women because they perceive it to be the accepted norm. For this and other reasons, there appears to be fertile ground in the University of Kentucky community for men's training. Men's empowerment training, which is relatively new, is designed to empower men to assert themselves in their environment and to confront false assertions of dominant norms. Most men report they are uncomfortable with racist, sexist, and homophobic statements, yet they often go along or are silent because of perceived peer pressure. Path breaking work exists in this area, and the University of Kentucky should pursue the possibility of using men's training to assist in reducing risks associated with alcohol culture. It is important to understand that this training does not focus primarily on how men should treat women, but on empowering men to act appropriately despite peer pressure.

Fourth, students consistently reported easy access to cheap alcohol, even for underage drinkers. The culture knows exactly where to acquire and use alcohol any given night of the week. In fact, there is a well-organized subculture in the University of Kentucky system. The student culture has created a very specific pattern of behavior, which students know by heart. I was able, for example, to get students to give me a weekly plan. With great specificity, each and every person in the room was able to tell me where individuals would go every night of the week for alcohol. There is an oral-informal events calendar that is as precise and well organized as any formal events calendar.

Fifth, students reported that one of the main safety techniques they employ is using friends to help. Members of the community understand that if someone “goes down” in the alcohol culture as an alcohol casualty, friends will step in and intervene to provide assistance. Nonetheless, some of these situations overwhelm friends and go beyond their skill sets. Students report being in situations they do not know how to handle.

Sixth, students reported concerns about safe transportation between events. They desire to have more safe rides.

Seventh, both the Genesis Group and Greek students agreed on many aspects of a vision of what they want from their campus. Genesis students, an impressive and well-organized group of individuals, are planning, and want to plan, more alcohol-free events. Genesis participants and leaders complain of the lack of alternatives. Again, programming emphasizing abstainers or non-drinkers will help the University to combat high-risk alcohol culture. The Genesis Group is thought of proudly and should continue to receive support and encouragement.

All students seem to recognize that the Greek community receives a great deal of negative attention. Greek students suggested that they should receive more positive recognition for the things they do, as opposed to emphasis on their negative deeds. All agreed that additional new housing is essential. Greek students stated the desire to have a closer relationship with their advising system, and some were quite forthright in suggesting that they needed better advisors. In any event, one thing became clear: Greek students feel that there is tension between the administration and their organizations.

Eighth, students pointed to perceived inconsistencies in the regulation of alcohol culture; reference to tailgating and campus alcohol rules was common. Many students prefer a wet campus, and a number expressed concern over the fact that eighteen-year-olds can get into bars and easily obtain a drink. They also mentioned the prevalence of fake IDs.

Opportunities exist in this area. More late-night programming, such as “Wildcat Wild Nights,” and more alcohol-free programming will help. Improving the quality of certain living arrangements also may improve conditions. Better efforts to reduce underage entry and fake IDs are in order. And, recognizing that an underground culture exists and has its own mores and attitudes will help the University to develop efforts to combat high-risk alcohol use.

## **9. Admissions**

During my visit, I met individuals connected with the admissions and registrar functions. The admissions and registrar functions are well organized and well coordinated. Everyone seemed intimately aware of what everyone else on the team was doing. In a sense, admissions — and to a certain extent the registrar function — operates as a single organism. The clear leader of the operation is Don Witt. Members of the admissions team defer to Mr. Witt for leadership and direction, and in many ways the operations bear his signature. It also became apparent that admissions is a highly emphasized function in the general university structure and that Mr. Witt was brought into this role for his talent. He has been given an important charge from the leadership structure of the institution.

The primary focus of University of Kentucky admissions is on admissions statistics and improving those statistics. This office has been very competent in this regard, and statistics have shown improvement in many areas.

Admissions is typically not an arm of alcohol and other drug prevention. Two things are common among colleges. First, colleges, especially during the admissions process, tend to de-emphasize information related to risk factors. While parents and prospective students are given information that would inform them about risks and dangers on campus, including alcohol, this information is de-emphasized in the larger context of promoting the university. Second, inconsistencies in approaches to alcohol issues are typically not resolved in the admissions

process; for example, there is no attempt to reconcile the fact that alcohol figures prominently at athletic events with the university's no alcohol on campus policy. Resolving apparent contradictions is typically not the role of the admissions office.

It was clear after meeting with the admissions and registrar group that emphasizing alcohol and other drug issues in the admissions process is considered a potential risk to the admissions process. This group is concerned that parents may adversely react to more substantial references to alcohol and other drug issues and fear they are sending their students to a dangerous campus. It was also clear during the meeting that the admissions office has no open strategy for addressing student alcohol problems. Moreover, there is not a clear strategy related to how alcohol and drug issues impact admissions and retention. The emphasis on the positive, which is the natural role of the admissions process, is at odds with self-reflection and resolution of paradoxes.

More than any other meeting that I had on campus, it was clear that this group desires to project a very positive image of the University of Kentucky. I detected some level of hostility toward alcohol and drug programming coming from one member of the group. In short, there is a certain reluctance to embrace the alcohol issue.

The University of Kentucky has had some fairly typical student admissions visit procedures. There are sleep-over visits, and current students often give campus tours to prospective students. It is exceedingly important to insure that campus visits are monitored and managed so that prospective students do not receive negative social norms regarding the community. I fear this is happening. As part of a campus visit, some prospective students receive an informal alcohol tour. I received information from members of the existing student body which suggests that pre-matriculation visits are often used as a way to teach the incoming students about the alcohol culture. In other words, visitors learn which bars to go to, where to

find alcohol, and what the drinking patterns on campus are perceived to be. Although the admissions office provides some training to the student-hosts, it must also evaluate what is actually happening during the visits.

Registrar functions are very professional and high caliber. Nonetheless, many infractions for alcohol do not become part of any permanent record kept by the registrar.

The University has a tremendous opportunity to improve both alcohol consumption rates and retention by focusing on the admissions process. Although the major attributed reason for retention problems is that many students come from rural Kentucky and have trouble making the adjustment into college and become homesick, there is little doubt that alcohol plays a role in some, if not many, of the retention issues. Right now, the University retention problem has been handled as an admissions issue — fill more seats to reach a target retained class. A better admissions approach could reduce the need for a high yield to compensate for lack of retention. Admissions *and* retention rates — both key statistics for national rankings — can improve.

I perceive that change in this area may be difficult, as the admissions process does not seem to be as openly self-reflective as other areas. I recommend that the University of Kentucky rethink its admissions process and put more emphasis on alcohol prevention throughout, especially with respect to issues regarding the admission, orientation, and matriculation of entering freshmen. Critically, the Director of Admissions should sit regularly with the campus alcohol or risk management team when it is formulated.

## **10. Legal**

Many individuals commented on the strength of the legal counsel's office. Legal counsel's work in a flagship state university involves a heavy dose of trustee and legislative involvement. Barbara Jones, principal legal counsel, is an excellent choice to represent the University of Kentucky both in trustee meetings and in the Kentucky Legislature. Her prior

experience suits her perfectly for the job that she has. It appears that T. Lynn Williamson — another excellent attorney — deals principally with day-to-day risk management and legal liability issues.

Two issues emerged in our meeting. First, it is apparent from discussions with legal counsel that their preferred strategy to manage the alcohol culture is more consistent with the bystander era. Legal counsel clearly is concerned that assuming duties toward off-campus behavior or other student behaviors may result in legal liability. Second, it appears that legal counsel participates principally in NACUA (National Association of College and University Attorneys) programming for continuing education. Neither Barbara Jones nor T. Lynn Williamson has recently attended either the Vermont Legal Issues in Higher Education Conference or Stetson's National Conference on Law and Higher Education. These conferences are the major national conferences on interdisciplinary issues in higher education law and policy. Most likely, T. Lynn Williamson should be the University of Kentucky's representative at least one, if not both, of these conferences annually. He should be given the time and funds to attend these important conferences.

In addition, the campus environment has not been consistently educated in evolving law and policy norms. Individual departments are acutely aware of their responsibilities. However, the campus as a whole seems to have a perception of the law of Kentucky that is not entirely consistent with recent legislative and judicial development. In other words, the perception that the law looks a certain way may be driving attitudes and policy initiatives at the University in ways that are not entirely consistent with how the law is actually developing in Kentucky or elsewhere. For example, the bystander era has come under significant attack throughout the country, including in some of the country's most conservative jurisdictions. Moreover, risk management is rapidly catching on in higher education. Thus, a major recommendation is that

the University of Kentucky commit to more law and policy education both for counsel and for the greater University of Kentucky community.

It is worth noting that the University of Kentucky has played a prominent role in recent programming discussing alcohol and other drug prevention and modern law and policy developments. This leadership role, primarily coming from the Division of Student Affairs and Meg Quarles and Topsy Staten, should be encouraged and furthered. Greater law and policy knowledge will translate into better prevention.

#### **11. Greek affairs**

During my visit, I met with both Greek student leaders and their advisors, Susan West and Mike Falkowitz. It is clear that there is some distance between the students and their advising leadership. The Greek advisors appeared beleaguered. There is mistrust on both sides.

Greek affairs at public universities are entering an interesting phase. Greek organizations were once pillars of the academic and social community. In the late 1970's, and especially in the 1980's, college alcohol use began to change. Many began to associate high-risk alcohol use with fraternities, and the law responded by imposing significant responsibility on Greeks for injuries arising out of alcohol culture.

The University of Kentucky, with its beleaguered Greek advisors, disgruntled Greek leaders, and a community both frustrated with and taking advantage of the Greek culture, is not unique. Greek students are well organized, dominate student organizations, provide major social venues, and give a tremendous amount of organized social service. The loss of these groups would be noticeable. The University can take steps to help the Greek system and the university community as a whole. Below are specific recommendations relating to the Greek system.

First, do not delegate all regulatory functions to Greek units. Although the University exercises jurisdiction over Greek affairs, Greek units have been given de facto authority to

regulate themselves in some areas. However, many of these organizations are not capable of wholly regulating themselves, and can function only if they have outside assistance. A major problem has been ridding a house of a bad member (see “third” and “fourth” below). Extending University authority over Greek units will certainly provide occasion for a point of conflict with Greek organizations and their national leadership structures. Thus, each and every assertion of authority should be carefully considered and discussed in advance.

Second, a fully functioning Greek system requires a significant statement of relationship of mutual purpose and interdependence between Greek groups in a university. To some extent, the University of Kentucky has undertaken this process, but something akin to a constitutional convention is needed. The University should sponsor a “rights and responsibilities” summit in which representatives collaborate to define positive aspects of the working relationship and to articulate mutual rights and responsibilities.

Third, the general condition of men’s Greek housing in the United States is deplorable. Greek men’s houses are often overwhelmed with capacity, repair issues, trash, and fire code problems. This is in stark contrast with the Greek women’s housing, which is comparatively immaculate. The men’s groups are often burdened by house payments or other financial obligations (men pay several times what women pay for insurance), and some have few resources to meet their housing needs. Moreover, the pressure to make house payment means that groups are reluctant to eliminate members except for the most extreme reasons. Thus, the University should consider, as part of the summit mentioned above, the possibility of agreeing to assist houses to continue operating in a reasonable ways.

Fourth, the University should recognize the phenomenon of high-risk facilitators. Certain individuals on campus create disproportionate risk. Enablers or facilitators are often at the root of others’ negative behavior. These facilitators and enablers often engage in bullying,

boycotting, and other socially inappropriate behavior to gain social standing or power in a group. These students are often not elected leaders, but have become self-appointed leaders in unofficial capacities. Greek groups often experience difficulty dealing with these individuals internally. Houses can be completely overwhelmed by just one or two bullies. Thus, codes of conduct and statements of standards and responsibilities should emphasize and target those who facilitate, enable, and encourage bad behavior.

Fifth, the University must acknowledge the positive contributions of the Greek culture. Greek groups contribute a great deal to the University of Kentucky campus. Group leaders often complain that there is overemphasis on negative behaviors, in lieu of emphasis on positive behaviors. An opportunity exists to promote the very values that are emphasized in Greek groups' own aspirational statements. Most Greek groups set extremely high expectations for themselves and members of their community. However, these lofty statements of ideal and principle are often honored in the breach. Values such as fellowship are not consistent with high-risk alcohol behavior. Asking all University of Kentucky students to live up to their stated values has educational value in itself, and may have great safety significance.

Sixth, the University must support the Greek advisors. The attrition rate among Greek advisors is among the highest of any job in higher education. Many Greek advisors stay only for a short period of time, and those who stay longer often express extremely high job dissatisfaction. Caught in the crossfire between universities and Greek organizations, these advisors face the constant prospect of losing students they are intimately involved in advising to serious injury or death. There may be no more taxing job, both physically and mentally, on any American campus. The job also often demands 9-to-5 administrator meetings, and then extensive work beyond normal business hours. To have more productive Greek relations, it is essential to recognize the physical, emotional, and spiritual toll on those who provide this most

important service. The University of Kentucky should investigate ways to improve the conditions under which Greek advisors work. It is also critical that Greek advisors be given a strong role in developing and enforcing new policies and rules they need to do their jobs effectively.

## **12. Alumni**

The University of Kentucky has a large and typically committed alumni base. In addition, the University of Kentucky has a well-organized alumni affairs program, and some excellent alumni relations personnel.

Alumni events often feature alcohol. Some of these events take place on or near campus, and some are visible to students.

Although individual alums certainly interface with current and prospective students and pass along their perceptions of alcohol use and alcohol culture at the University of Kentucky, this impact seems to be largely individualized. Unlike some schools, the University of Kentucky alumni base does not seem to be a major force in promoting high-risk alcohol use among college students. Again, the largest alumni impact seems to be from very visible drinking at football games and other alumni events on or near campus.

In talking with staff, I detected concern over the level of alcohol consumption at some alumni events. There clearly has been a change in perception: in the 1980's and 1990's, large amounts of alcohol at college development or alumni functions were common and accepted. Today, many individuals frown on high levels of alcohol use at development activities and alumni functions, and the trend is toward reducing the amount of alcohol consumed at these events. This trend is a good one for college alcohol use at the University of Kentucky.

One opportunity lies in developing a cadre of alumni who are equivalent to the student Genesis Group. In other words, the University could identify alumni who support responsible

levels of college alcohol use or abstention and organize them into an effective action group. If this approach is adopted, the University should seek out more moderate members of the alumni group; all too often, self-identified alumni who want a leadership role on alcohol issues are strongly opposed to any alcohol use by college students, on or even off campus. Prohibition is not an effective tactic for most college campuses, and is not a good tactic for the University of Kentucky. Centrist individuals, or group of individuals, could be participate on the campus community coalition and also advance that group's work.

Another tremendous opportunity is to provide alumni education programming. One of the least alcohol-programmed groups in the United States is alumni organizations. These groups rarely receive the kind of systematic alcohol education that other constituencies in the university community do. I recommend that the University of Kentucky use Topsy Staten and Meg Quarles, or others, to organize, in conjunction with alumni affairs, specific ongoing educational programs for alumni.

### **13. Campus safety**

The campus safety department at the University Kentucky is an excellent operation. One reason that the University of Kentucky's injury rate from high-risk alcohol use is so low is that the campus safety staff is engaged and introspective. University of Kentucky police also work well with city police. (There was an incident occurring while I was visiting campus that caused a strain between the two operations, but it was apparent that a great deal of good will existed between the two organizations.)

The University of Kentucky police department, however, is only as good as the rules it has to enforce. The force recognizes the importance of off-campus rules and regulations. In addition, campus police recognize that students have become adroit at avoiding getting caught under the existing rule system. Without a proper rule system, individuals engaging in high-risk

alcohol use, and facilitating that use by others, will escape enforcement by campus police. As with many other operations, campus police were concerned with the quality of certain housing units, particularly freshmen living quarters. On the whole, however, the campus police at the University of Kentucky appear to have sufficient resources to manage the campus environment. Notably, changes in operating hours at alcohol serving establishments apparently put little strain on the department; all that seems to have occurred was to push problems to a slightly later time with approximately the same number of campus police needed to handle them.

#### **14. Athletics**

I was very fortunate to meet with directors of intercollegiate athletics programs. Undoubtedly, the University of Kentucky puts a tremendous emphasis on intercollegiate athletics, as the staff in both areas is exceptional and highly motivated. The leadership openly promotes of prevention. The intercollegiate football program, which is subject to national intercollegiate athletic rule systems, is one with great drug and alcohol risk, and one that has a system in place to deal with these issues.

## **VI. Conclusions and Recommendations**

For ease of reference, the major conclusions and recommendations of this Report are distilled into a separate Executive Summary. The Executive Summary should be considered a programmatic document, but reading and digesting the full Report is an essential part of the process of understanding the recommendations and the need to implement them.

The University of Kentucky campus is not a campus that has turned its back on high-risk alcohol use issues. Instead, committed efforts by individuals charged with responsibility over student affairs and alcohol issues have brought the University of Kentucky some significant distance in combating high-risk alcohol use. In many ways, the University's efforts have been forward-thinking and cutting-edge. I urge continued progress in this direction, and recognize that many institutions are not nearly as far along as the University of Kentucky.

In addition, the University of Kentucky campus environment is not the most risky campus environment in the United States. Indeed, most indicators show that drinking patterns are near or at national and regional averages. The Greek community is prominent but not exceptionally at risk. Also, driving is not as common a way to transport to alcohol events as it is elsewhere. The City of Lexington and the general environment around the University of Kentucky are not highly dangerous or especially conducive to very high-risk alcohol consumption. Compare, for example, the inherent dangers of a campus like Syracuse University in New York, or Tulane University in Louisiana. While weapons issues no doubt exist, the University of Kentucky is not in an area where gun use and possession are common. Thus, on the whole, the University of Kentucky does not present exceptional danger.

Nonetheless, this good news should not be an impetus for complacency. The University of Kentucky has had experienced fatalities and serious injuries. There is no predictable way to eliminate all catastrophic incidences, such as house fires or multiple-party injuries or deaths.

These types of events can occur even in very low-risk environments. As a result, efforts should continue to reduce high-risk alcohol use, and to reasonably mitigate risk in the environment.

The main conclusion of this Report is to encourage the University of Kentucky to adopt an environmental management strategy that is embraced campus-wide. To date, significant steps in this regard have been taken; however, much work remains. The key is to effectively encourage all key stakeholders in the University of Kentucky environment to participate collaboratively and cooperatively toward common goals. Often, full integration of a campus into an environmental management strategy occurs only on the heels of a major tragedy. The University of Kentucky is forward-thinking for moving in this direction in advance of such a motivating tragedy.