

Anthropology 216: Reducing Alcohol Abuse on College Campuses: Addressing Student Health through Public Interest Anthropology

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Subject Area/Discipline: [Anthropology](#)
School: [University of Pennsylvania](#)
Project Area: [Health](#)

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Anthropology 216, Section 301.
Tuesday, 1:30-4:30
Office of Health Education, 3609 Locust Walk

Seminar Goal:

Alcohol abuse among college students is a serious problem across the United States. This seminar will combine anthropological tools and public health strategies to: 1) contextualize the phenomenon historically and culturally; 2) encourage students to critically analyze existing alcohol prevention and intervention approaches; 3) use the University of Pennsylvania campus as a local case study/field site to investigate the problem and generate solutions for it; 4) move from theory to action through drafting a feasible proposal addressing alcohol reduction on Penn's campus or engage in the implementation of an existing proposal/project.

Expectations for Seminar Participants:

- Attend weekly meetings having read assignments thoroughly and coming prepared to discuss and debate the issues they present.
- Engage in ethnographic fieldwork (participant-observation and interviewing etc.) related to investigating alcohol abuse on campus in preparation for the final project.
- Complete three 1-5 page written response papers throughout the semester
- Prepare drafts and progress reports of the final assignment for feedback before the final deadline.
- Write a 15-page proposal to reduce alcohol abuse on campus or an analysis of an existing project that includes original research, a literature review, application of theory, and an integration of an ethnographic component.

- Prepare a concise, polished 10-15 minute oral presentation of your proposal to class.

WEEK I (Jan. 18): Introduction: Defining the Problem, Considering a Framework for Solutions

What is alcohol abuse? How does alcohol abuse in the college setting differ than when defined in the broader sense? What is Public Interest Anthropology? What motivated you to enroll in this course?

- Keeling R, Drinking in College: The Politics of Research and Prevention, *Journal of American College Health*. 1998; 47:51-55.
- Sanday, P. Opening Statement: Defining Public Interest Anthropology, <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~psanday/pia.99.html>

WEEK II (Jan. 25): The Local Context: Alcohol at Penn, Effects of Alcohol on Community Relations with West Philadelphia

To what community does Penn belong? What do drinking patterns at Penn look like? What have you observed already? How does alcohol consumption by Penn students impact the larger West Philadelphia community?

- A Council Discussion: Alcohol and Civility at Penn. Almanac. December 16/23, 1997. <http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/v44/n16/alcohol.html>
- For Comment: Final Report of the Working Group on Alcohol Abuse. Almanac. May 4, 1999. <http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/v45/n31/FCalcohol.html>
- Greenwood D, Whyte W, Harkavy I. Participatory Action Research as a Process and as a Goal. *Human Relations*. 1993;46:2: 175-192.
- McCalla J, Q & A: Judith Rodin. *Pennsylvania Current*. Oct. 1, 1998.
- Neighborhood Health Profiles: West Philadelphia. Philadelphia Health Management Corporation. 1994.
- Of Record: The University Alcohol and Drug Policy. Almanac. September 7, 1999. <http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/v46/n02/A-Dpolicy.html>
- On Changes in Parental Notification Procedure. Almanac Between Issues. October 29, 1999. <http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/between/parent-notif.html>
- Report of the President's Special Committee on Alcohol Abuse. Almanac. Sept. 15, 1998. <http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/v45/n03/alcohol.html>
- University of Pennsylvania. Data from Harvard School of Public Health Surveys: 1993 and 1997.
- University of Pennsylvania. Data from Web Based Survey. March, 1999.
- University of Pennsylvania. Electronic Mail Communication. March 31 and April 1, 1999.

WEEK III (Feb. 1): The Global Context: Alcohol in a Historical and Cross-Cultural Context.

How do concepts of moderation, excess, and uses of intoxication vary cross-

culturally and over time? What can we learn from patterns of alcohol consumption internationally and historically? How is the understanding of these variations important to the goal of this seminar?

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Conduct a literature search on alcohol use/abuse in another historical or cultural setting and write a 3-5 page summary of your findings.

- Ames G. American Beliefs About Alcoholism: Historical Perspectives on the Medical-Moral Controversy. In Bennett L, Ames G. *The American Experience With Alcohol: Contrasting Cultural Perspectives*. New York: Plenum Press. 1985:23-39.
- Caetano R, Clark C L, Tam T. Alcohol Consumption Among Racial/Ethnic Minorities: Theory and Research. *Alcohol Health & Research World*. 1998; 22(4):233-241.
- Flacks R, Thomas S. Among Affluent Students, A Culture of Disengagement. *Chronicle of Higher Education*. November 27, 1998.
- Lee J M. Historical and Theoretical Considerations: Implications for Multiculturalism in Substance Abuse Services. In Gordon J U (Ed), *Managing Multiculturalism in Substance Abuse Services*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. 1994: 3-21.
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. College Students and Drinking. *Alcohol Alert*. July, 1995.
- Room R. Alcohol and Ethnography: A Case of Problem Deflation?. *Current Anthropology*. 1984; 25(2): 169-191.
- Wechsler H, Molnar B E, Davenport A E, Baer J S. College Alcohol Use: A Full or Empty Glass?. *Journal of American College Health*. 1999; 47(6): 247-252.
- Warner H. Alcohol Trends in College Life: Historical Perspectives. In Maddox G. *The Domesticated Drug: Drinking Among Collegians*. New Haven: College & University Press. 1970:45-80.

WEEK IV (Feb. 8): The Individual Body: Pharmacological Effects of Alcohol Abuse

At what level is alcohol abuse a problem of the individual? How does understanding its effect on the human body help us understand how to manage the problem at the level of the group? How are medical facts and empirical observations about alcohol influenced by cultural beliefs?

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Hand in one paragraph abstract of your proposed research.

- Browning M D, Hoffer B J, Dunwiddie T V. Alcohol, Memory, and Molecules. *Alcohol Health & Research World*. 1992; 16(4):280-284.
- Dimeff L A, Baer J S, Kivlahan D R, Marlatt G A.. Alcohol Use and Prevention of Alcohol Abuse in College Students. In *Brief Alcohol*

Screening and Intervention for College Students (BASICS): A Harm Reduction Approach. New York: The Guilford Press. 1999:7-17

- Dufour M. What is Moderate Drinking: Defining "Drinks" and Drinking Levels. *Alcohol Research & Health.* 1999; 23(1): 5-14.
- Keller, Mark. On the Loss-Of-Control Phenomenon in Alcoholism. *British Journal of Addiction.* 1972; 67:153- 166.
- Kuhn C, Swartzwelder S, Wilson W. Alcohol. In *Buzzed: The Straight Facts About the Most Used and Abused Drugs from Alcohol to Ecstasy.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company. 1998:29-54.
- Miller J. Clinic Nurses: Confronting Campus Alcohol Use on the Frontline. *Journal of American College Health.* 1997; 45:205-208.
- Room, R. Dependence and Society. *British Journal of Addiction* 80.1985: 133-139.

WEEK V (Feb. 15): The Social Body: Public Health and Alcohol

What is public health? How can it be used to create social change? How can it be used to reduce alcohol abuse? How can public health and anthropology work in concert?

- Brown, C. Anthropology and Social Marketing: A Powerful Combination. In *Practicing Anthropology*, 1997;19(4):27-29.
- Flick, U. et al. The Social Construction of Individual and Public Health: Contributions of Social Representation Theory to a Social Science of Health: Representations, Communities and Health. In *Social Science Information*, 1998;37(4): 639-662.
- Griffith, et al. Individually Directed Intervention as a Component of the Public Health Response to Alcohol. *Alcohol Policy and Public Good.* Oxford Medical Publications, 1994: 187-201.
- Griffith, et al. Policy Implications. *Alcohol Policy and Public Good.* Oxford Medical Publications, 1994:202-213.
- Prochaska J, DiClemente C, Norcross J. In Search of How People Change: *Applications to Addictive Behaviors.* American Psychologist. 1992;47(9):1102-1114.
- Wilson RP. The Role of Anthropologists as Short-Term Consultants: Negotiating with Communities. *Human Organization.* 1998;57(2):245-252.

WEEK VI (Feb. 22): Progress Reports, Midway Evaluation of Course

ASSIGNMENT: Come prepared to for an informal discussion on the progress of your project and to provide feedback for your colleagues and to make recommendations for the second half of the semester.

WEEK VII (Feb. 29): Alcohol, Media and Technology

How are people's perceptions of alcohol influenced by the media? How do technological advances impact how we acquire information about alcohol? How can we use media and technology as a tool in this course?

ASSIGNMENTS: 1) Having attended a "virtual" party using the Alcohol 101 CD-Rom, come prepared to discuss it's effectiveness in presenting information, correcting misperceptions and changing attitudes about alcohol consumption by college students. 2) Visit the web site of Dr. Wes Perkins at Hobart and Williams College - <http://www.hws.edu/~alcohol/>. Check out the "Campaign to Reduce Misperceptions" link. Come prepared to discuss the effectiveness of the campaign in presenting information, correcting misperceptions and changing attitudes and/or beliefs about alcohol consumption by college students.

- Abramson H. Alcohol Giants Market Misery to "Third World". *The Marin Institute for the Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems Newsletter*. 1997;12:1-6.
- Abramson H. Showdown on Main Street. *The Marin Institute for the Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems Newsletter*. 1997;12:1-5.
- MacKinnon D P, Lapin A. Effects of Alcohol Warnings and Advertisements: A Test of the Boomerang Hypothesis. *Psychology & Marketing*. 1998;15(7):707-726.
- Mathios A, Avery R, Bisogni C, Shanahan J. Alcohol Protrayal on Prime-Time Television: Manifest and Latent Messages. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*. 1998;5:305-310.

WEEK VIII (Mar. 7): Alcohol, Gender Dynamics and Violence against Women

Does alcohol affect men and women differently? What is the role of alcohol in sexual and social interaction? How is alcohol and violence against women linked?

(Note: This week students have the alternative of reading and presenting on the ethnography, Fraternity Gang Rape: Sex and Brotherhood on Campus by Penn professor of Anthropology, Peggy R. Sanday).

- Abbey A. Acquaintance Rape and Alcohol Consumption on College Campuses: How Are they Linked? *Journal of American College Health*. 1991;39:165-169.
- Butcher A H, Manning D T, O'Neal E D. HIV-Related Sexual Behaviors of College Students. *Journal of American College Health*. 1991;40:115-118.
- Kashubeck S, Mintz L. Eating Disorder Symptomology and Substance Use in College Females. *Journal of College Student Development*. 1996;37(4):396-404.
- Meilman P. Alcohol-Induced Sexual Behavior on Campus. *Journal of American College Health*. 1993;42:27-29.

- Mumenthaler M S, Taylor J L, O'Hara R, Yesavage J A. Gender Differences in Moderate Drinking Effects. *Alcohol Research & Health*. 1999;23(1):55-64.
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Alcohol, Violence, and Aggression. *Alcohol Alert*. 1997;38:1-4.
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Are Women More Vulnerable to Alcohol's Effects? *Alcohol Alert*. 1999;46:1-4.
- Palmer C. Violence and Other Forms of Victimization in Residence Halls: Perspectives of Residence Assistants. *Journal of College Student Development*. 1996;37(3):268-278.
- Sax L. Health Trends Among College Freshmen. *Journal of American College Health*. 1997;45:252-262.

Spring Break: Mon. March 13- Fri. March 17.

WEEK IX (Mar. 21): Multiculturalism on Campus: Alcohol and Specific Student Communities

Is Penn's campus multicultural? What are student's perceptions of campus drinking within different student communities? How does a multicultural community make it difficult to create an alcohol policy?

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Hand in 3-5 page synopsis of an interview with a student who belongs to a different "community" than you (i.e. international student, different sexual orientation, involved in different campus activities) on his/her attitudes about alcohol.

- DeBord K, Wood P, Sher K, Good G. The Relevance of Sexual Orientation to Substance Abuse and Psychological Distress Among College Students. *Journal of College Student Development*. 1998;39(2):157-168.
- Cashin, J R, Presley C A, Meilman P W. Alcohol use in the Greek system: follow the leader? *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*. 1998; 59(1): 63-70.
- Reese F, Friend R. Alcohol Expectancies and Drinking Practices Among Black and White Undergraduate Males. *Journal of American College Health*. 1992;40:299-301.
- Leichter J, Meilman P, Presley C, Cashin J. Alcohol Use and Related Consequences Among Students With Varying Levels of Involvement in College Athletics. *Journal of American College Health*. 1998;46:257-262.

WEEK X (Mar. 28): Grave Considerations: Alcohol Related Deaths and Other Health Threatening Issues

What are the most significant short and long term consequences of alcohol abuse? Describe the impact alcohol related deaths on college campuses have

had in shaping the perception of the problem of college drinking nationally and here at Penn?

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Choose one article from the Eighth Special Report to the U. S. Congress on Alcohol and Health (1993) and write a 1-2 page (double-spaced) response to the article.

- Brodsky J, Downey E. *Undergraduate Alcohol Deaths: An Analysis of Alcohol-Related Deaths on College Campuses*. Final Project for General Honors 216. Spring, 1999.
- Clayton M. Fuller Picture Emerges of College Drinking. *Christian Science Monitor*. September 29, 1999.

WEEK XI (Apr. 4): Analyzing and Evaluating Programs and Policies

What programs work? Why do they work? How do we critique them? What are the characteristics of an effective policy? Who are the stakeholders in a policy formation?

- Collins L. Holland's Half-Baked Drug Experiment. *Foreign Affairs*. 1999;78(3):82-98.
- DeJong W, Wallack L. A Critical Perspective on the Drug Czar's Antidrug Media Campaign. *Journal of Health Communication*. 1999;4:155-160.
- Finn P. Substance-Free Residence Halls: The Promise and the Practice. *Journal of American College Health*. 1996;45:51-58.
- Freeman, E. Multicultural Model for Program Evaluation. In Gordon J U (Ed), *Managing Multiculturalism in Substance Abuse Services*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. 1994: 199-215.
- Rentner T, Sadowski R. Altering Misperceptions of Alcohol Use on a College Campus Through Peer-Based Programming. *Peers and Prevention*. 1997; 1(2):11-15
- Haines M, Spear S. Changing the Perception of the Norm: A Strategy to Decrease Binge Drinking Among College Students. *Journal of American College Health*. 1996;45:134-140.
- Higher Education Act Passes. *Alcohol Issues & Solutions*. 1998;2(1):1-3.
- Marlatt G A, Baer J S, Kivlahan D R, Dimeff L A, Larimer M E, Quigley L A, Somers J M, Williams E. Screening and Brief Intervention for High-Risk College Student Drinkers: Results From a 2-Year Follow-Up Assessment. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*. 1998; 66(4):604-615.
- Perkins H. College Student Misperceptions of Alcohol and Other Drug Norms Among Peers: Exploring Causes, Consequences, and Implications for Prevention Programs. In: *Designing Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Programs in Higher Education: Bringing Theory Into Practice*. U.S. Dept. of Education. 1997.

- Zimmerman R. *Social Marketing Strategies for Campus Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems*. Newton, Massachusetts: Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention. 1997.

WEEK XII-XIII (Apr. 11 and Apr. 18): Final Presentations

WEEK XIV (Apr 25): Closure: Course Evaluation and Recommendations for Revision

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Write a 3-5 page response evaluating the course. Consider strengths and weaknesses in course design, instruction, readings, assignments, etc. Offer suggestions for improvement. Come prepared to discuss your recommendations.

FINAL WRITTEN VERSION OF PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE FRIDAY, MAY 5TH