



Office of Student Conduct
Promoting Integrity, Character, & Ethics

Responsible Action Protocol
Report to the University Senate Executive Committee
 October 27, 2010

Background

In May 2009 the President acknowledged receipt of University Senate resolutions on Promoting Responsible Action in Medical Emergencies. This action formally adopted the following (see University Senate Chair Holum memorandum to President Mote dated April 23, 2009):

1. To endorse likewise the administrative protocol entitled Promoting Responsible Action in Medical Emergencies formulated by the Student Conduct Committee and recommend that the Office of Student Conduct adopt it as administrative procedures for cases of medical emergencies involving a student in possession or under the influence of alcohol who summons medical emergency assistance for him/herself or on behalf of a fellow student.
2. To request that the Office of Student Conduct, after a one-year trial period, report to the Senate Executive Committee on the results of the implementation of the new administrative procedures. The University Senate of 2010-2011 will then examine whether it is advisable to propose a new University policy to apply in such cases.

Effective Fall 2009 the attached administrative protocol entitled Promoting Responsible Action in Medical Emergencies (RAP) was adopted as an administrative procedure by the Office of Student Conduct. In turn, the Office of Rights and Responsibilities with the Department of Resident Life was requested to implement RAP in handling applicable cases in and around the residence halls.

Alcohol Transport Data

As the chart below indicates, the number of student requiring medical transport for alcohol related issues has increased over the past three years. The total number of student transports in 2008-09 increased by 30% over 2007-08. During the first year of RAP implementation in 2009-10 the total number of student transports increased by 36% over the previous year. The most significant change during the RAP implementation seems to be the number of students receiving transport during the Fall 2009 increasing by 66% over the previous fall semester.

	Fall 07	Spr 08	Total 07-08	Fall 08	Spr 09	Total 08-09	Fall 09	Spr 10	Total 09-10
Transports	13	14	27	18	10	28	30	16	46
Refusal	10	3	13	13	11	24	12	13	25
TOTAL	23	17	40	31	21	52	50	34	71

The trend over this three year period indicates a steady increase in the total number of alcohol related transports. The increase in 2009-10 cannot be definitively attributed to the implementation of RAP.

Assessment Results

During Spring 2010 a survey of 1,500 randomly selected students was conducted with the purpose of assessing knowledge of RAP and factors that might contribute to calling for medical assistance. We received a 26% return rate with 400 respondents. In addition, we “over-surveyed” fraternities and sororities by providing the survey link to chapter presidents requesting that they encourage members to complete.

Overall, 88% of students responding indicate (strongly/moderately agree) that they can identify the warning signs of alcohol poisoning. Additionally, 89% indicate that it is very likely or moderately likely that they would seek help if worried about a friend’s health or safety after drinking.

The most important result of the survey was that 56% of students were NOT aware of RAP prior to completing the survey. Of those students responding that they were aware of RAP 71% lived in an on-campus residence hall. This results indicates that the Department of Resident Life did an effective job promoting RAP to resident students, but that further marketing efforts should be considered for off-campus students.

When asked to what extent various reasons might keep students from seeking help, *possible punishment from the University* was most significant. Over 50% of students report that punishment would factor into their decision either “a great deal” or “considerably.” This would seem to support the implementation of RAP as a way of addressing this perception.

2009-10 RAP Implementation

Over the 2009-10 academic year RAP was applied to 45 students. It is important to note that all situations in which RAP was considered occurred in the residence halls. No incidents were reported occurring elsewhere on campus that required RAP to be considered.

	Fall 09	Spr 10	Total
RAP Applied	30	15	45
RAP Not Applied	24	15	39
Alcohol – Caller	7	1	8

An RAP “implementation team” was created comprised of representatives from the Health Center, Department of Resident Life, Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, and Office of Student Conduct. They developed the survey and continue to meet to assess the overall effectiveness of both the implementation as well as marketing. In addition to specific marketing efforts directed toward all resident students (posters, residence hall floor/hall meetings, staff training) a general notice was sent electronically to all students highlighting RAP.

Recommendations

After a one-year “trial period” as requested by the Senate Executive Committee, the following recommendations are made:

1. Continue marketing efforts geared toward making all students aware of RAP and encouraging “responsible action” in medical emergencies.
2. Continue to collect data regarding alcohol related transports and application of RAP in order to assess overall trends.
3. Continue implementation and application of RAP as developed as an administrative protocol. There does not seem to be justification to modify the existing protocol or to create/institute a more formal policy.



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Promoting Responsible Action in Medical Emergencies

Introduction

The health and safety of University students is of paramount concern. All members of the University community are encouraged to act in a responsible manner when an individual may require medical assistance by dialing 911 or 301.405.3333 or seeking a University official. In situations in which either a student summoning or requiring help is under the influence of alcohol, the threat of disciplinary sanctions for violating the University's alcohol policy should not be a barrier to responsible action. *Promoting Responsible Action in Medical Emergencies* is an administrative protocol¹ authorized by the Director of Student Conduct to provide conditional relief in certain defined situations. The purpose is to encourage students to seek assistance for medical emergencies.

Protocol of the Office of Student Conduct

1. A student in possession or under the influence of alcohol who summons medical emergency assistance for him/herself or on behalf of a fellow student experiencing a medical emergency will normally not face disciplinary charges under the *Code of Student Conduct* or *Residence Hall Rules* for the possession or use of alcohol. In lieu of disciplinary charges and as a condition of such relief, students handled under this protocol will usually be required to be evaluated by the University Health Center staff and successfully complete an approved alcohol intervention program.
2. This protocol also extends to the student for whom medical emergency assistance has been summoned.
3. Students referred to the Office of Student Conduct or the Department of Resident Life for alcohol use or possession will be interviewed by a representative of the unit. If the student is eligible for conditional relief under this protocol, the initiation of disciplinary charges will normally be "deferred" under part 28 of the *Code of Student Conduct* pending successful completion of an approved alcohol intervention program. If the student successfully completes the program to the satisfaction of the Health Center staff and the Office of Student Conduct/Department of Resident Life, the pending

¹ This protocol constitutes instructions by the Director to the staff of the Office of Student Conduct describing how a limited range of alcohol-related conduct will be regularly managed under the *Code of Student Conduct* and Residence Hall Rules. It also serves to inform the Campus Community of what has and shall be the customary practice of the Office of Student Conduct. It must be understood, however, this protocol is not an established University policy or rule and may, from time-to-time be changed by the Director. Similarly, on a case-by-case basis and notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this protocol, the possession or use of alcohol in violation of the University's alcohol policy may be handled differently when the Director determines that under the peculiar facts of the situation it is in the best interests of the institution or persons involved. It is for these reasons the words "normally" and "usually" are employed in the protocol.

charges will be withdrawn, leaving the student with no disciplinary record. If the student fails to successfully complete the program, charges for alcohol use and possession will be processed and, if proved, may result in more severe sanctions and a disciplinary record.

Exclusions

1. The conditional relief from disciplinary charges described in this protocol does not extend to charges other than possession or use of alcohol. In addition, it shall not provide relief from disciplinary charges pertaining to the alleged possession or use of alcohol which, if proven:

- (a) would constitute an “Aggravated Violation” as defined under Paragraph 2(a) of the *Code of Student Conduct*:

“[T]he term “aggravated violation” means a violation which resulted or foreseeably could have resulted in significant damage to persons or property or which otherwise posed a substantial threat to the stability and continuance of normal University or University sponsored activities.”

“Aggravated Violation” also includes:

“...[R]ioting, assault, theft, vandalism, arson, or breach of the peace related directly or indirectly to University sponsored activities;” or,

- (b) involve or are associated with the distribution of alcohol to a person under the legal drinking age.

2. Students with a prior disciplinary record of alcohol-related violations and students previously granted relief under this protocol, shall only be eligible for relief on an individual-by-individual basis following an assessment by the Office of Student Conduct.

3. This protocol does not and cannot offer conditional relief, immunity or protection from criminal complaint, arrest or prosecution by University police or other person or official for illegal activity, including the illegal use or possession of alcohol in violation of County, State or Federal law. It does not provide relief from any civil suit, fine or financial obligation to any party (including the University), for loss, damage or injury associated with alcohol use or possession. It must be emphasized that the “charges” and “violations” referred to in the protocol are only charges and violations under the *Code of Student Conduct* and/or under *Residence Hall Rules*.

4. This protocol does not offer conditional relief to student organizations, which remain subject to organizational charges for alcohol-related violations, including possession and use. The nature of such charges and any resulting disciplinary sanctions, however, will take into account and may be mitigated by the action taken by organizational representatives. A representative of a student organization who summons medical emergency assistance may be eligible for conditional relief from charges for his or her personal use or possession of alcohol under this protocol.