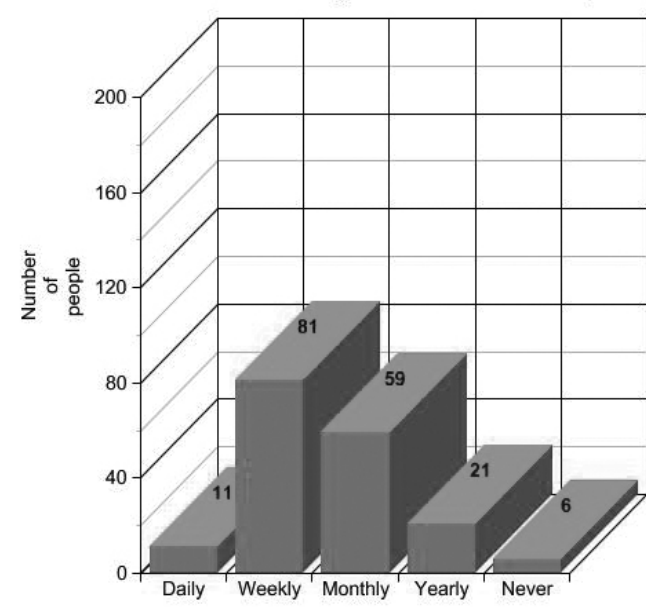
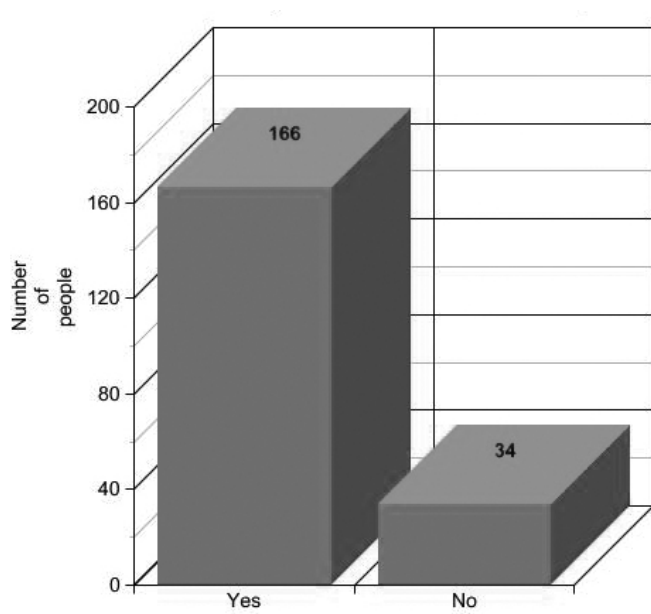
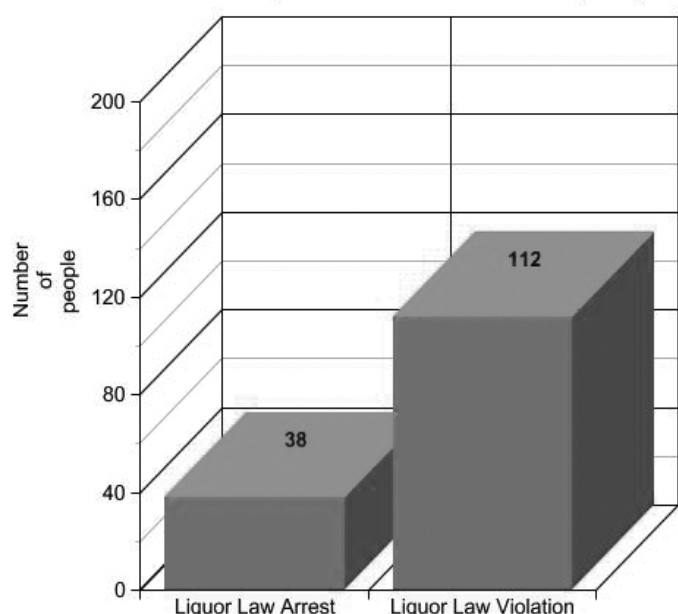


Alcohol, drugs dominate campus Clery Reports

Journalism students in the News Writing course, under the direction of Professor Cindy Simoneau, reviewed the Clery Report from the four Connecticut State Universities and UConn. Students worked under senior project leaders, Jeniece Roman and Sandra Gomez-Aceves. Project reporters were Melissa Nunez, Sherly Montes, Ali Sorbara, Alex Palmieri, Lynandro Simmons, Karlie Borges, Megan Grabowski and Brittany Howard. Senior Dan Zumpano supervised surveys with team members Adrianna Rochester, Chris Kuczo, Mihai Tripp, Jared Klim and Abigail O'Keefe.



GRAPHS | DAN ZUMPARNO

Do you know a student at SCSU who has received a liquor law arrest or violation referred for disciplinary action?

Have you ever consumed alcohol on campus?

How often do you consume alcohol on campus?

Governance and discipline

At Southern an underage student caught with alcohol in any on-campus housing can result in one of two consequences: an alcohol law arrest or an alcohol law violation referred for disciplinary action. An arrest, Dooley explained, is actually an infraction that includes a \$136 fine and a 30-day license suspension, whether or not a motor vehicle was involved. An alcohol violation referred for disciplinary action results in alcohol education classes and is based on the particular needs and circumstances of the student involved.

"It's about keeping people safe," Dooley said of the process.

But whether a student gets the infraction or the disciplinary action is ultimately decided upon the severity of the case. A student watching Monday night football with a beer might not get as severe a punishment as the student hosting a party in a dorm, Piscitelli, director of student conduct explained.

Although Connecticut's state universities follow the same Student Code of Conduct, each school has a different way in approaching similar scenarios.

Sgt. Jerry Erwin of Central's Police

has greatly altered the campus' policing efforts, Eastern's Chief of Police Jeffrey Garewski said.

The pushback of the Willimantic community surrounding college partying off campus was a major reason for their strict penalties regarding alcohol and drug usage, Garweski said. While it wasn't solely the fault of Eastern students, there was an expectation the campus police would respond to the issues.

"We are going to take a harder stand on this drug and alcohol process," Garweski said.

Eastern, despite having the second smallest student population of the five universities and nearly a quarter that of UConn's, had the highest amount of alcohol law arrests. In 2015, they arrested or gave out 103 infractions and in the same year they referred 193 for alcohol law violation disciplinary action.

In a drastic numerical figure comparison, UConn with 18,826 enrollees in 2015 had 38 alcohol law arrests and 857 alcohol law violations referred for disciplinary action.

In the same year, UConn also had 218 drug arrests and 187 drug law violation referred for disciplinary action.

Deputy Chief Magdalena Silver of UConn said the Community Standards

can affect the behavior."

Any action taken against a student violating the rules was an action that was hopefully improving the student's future standings, Piscitelli said.

Prevention and guidance

Southern, Eastern, Western, Central and UConn all provide education and counseling services to students and often, it is the preferred method of handling campus issues.

"CHOICES is a harm reduction or risk reduction prosocial education package that kind of looks at why students drink and who the students are that are drinking. It really looks at the social norms for drinking, what the realities are," said Sandra Rose-Zak, coordinator of the Office of Wellness Education and Promotion at Eastern.

Aside from CHOICES, students who are caught with a second offense are referred to BASICS, which is a more intensive program Rose-Zak said.

Sarah Keiser, a counselor at Southern said the university also offers their own version of BASICS.

Keiser said there is also an online program called Alcohol Wise that comes in two parts.

"Part one goes through harm reduction education of alcohol and gives students scenarios. The second part of the course is about 10 minutes long," said Keiser.

"What they want to do in the course is see how the alcohol use has changed from taking the first part to the second part."

"I think there's always more that this university can do," said DeMezzo, Southern's Residence Life director, who often sees issues unfold in the campus dorms. "I think that we still need to invest more around programming and promoting resources to students."

Jonathan Beazley, a counselor from UConn said they offer a continuum of services and intervention programs.

"We are always trying to say we are here," said Beazley, "outreach is what we're about. And since the student passing, while I can't comment directly on what happened, in the wake of any tragedy we reach out to the students, we are constantly doing seminars, webinars and not just intervention to talk about substance abuse but also just letting students know we are here and we are available."

Differing perspectives

It was freshman year and Halloween night when Mai Kader, now 22 and a senior public health major at Southern, got into trouble at Hickerson Hall. It ended in just a warning but it shaped how Kader behaved the remaining of her college years.

"It was my first year ever drinking," Kader said, "so I didn't know how to handle my liquor."

"It's about being responsible for your own actions," Kader said. "It was a learning lesson, it was a lesson for me to control myself and my behavior."

In a survey conducted to 200 Southern students who live or have previously

lived in on-campus housing, 186 answered they have consumed alcohol in any of the of the 10 campus owned housing facilities. When the students were asked whether they consumed alcohol daily, weekly, monthly, yearly or never, 11 answered daily, and 81 answered with "weekly." Only six students said they have never drank alcohol on campus.

When the students were asked whether campus police enforced policy's, 147 answered yes. When the students were asked whether RA's enforced policy's, 160 said they did.

"Our school is the only school where you have to sign kids in," Nick D'Amico, a sophomore student at Southern said. "I've been to UConn, URI, Post, Eastern. I could walk into Eastern with a 30-rack and they won't say anything."

At Low Rise - a dorm for only upperclassmen at Eastern - the RA's don't particularly care, Natalia Torcaso a junior at the university said. "If you want to get messed up you come to Low-Rise," she said.

"For freshmen dorms it's really strict," Jenna Vinelli, a junior at Eastern said.

Vinelli had her license suspended and received a \$300 ticket for being caught with marijuana in a dorm her freshman year at the university. She said she went to disciplinary meeting and was placed on probation for two years.

"It's a dry campus so they do what they have to do," she said. "I actually feel like we could get in a lot more trouble."

A freshman UConn student, Gaby Lindade, said RA's are supposed to call police if they smell marijuana, but they don't always follow the rule, she said.

"It depends on the RA," said Lindade. "Some of them are more strict than others."

Lindade, a member of Greek life, said she and a lot of her members still can't talk about the death of the intoxicated underage UConn student, Jeffny Pally, who died after being run over by a fire truck. Two Greek organizations - Kappa Sig and Delta Gamma - were kicked off campus in connection to the death of Pally, Lindade said. "Everyone has a stereotype about Greek Life," she said. "But we have to do alcohol education programs."

"The beginning of the year there were a lot more police patrolling party areas," said Lindade. "I feel like it was sad for that time of the year then people just forgot about it."

2015 Clery Report Summary

	SCSU	ECSU	WCSU	CCSU	UConn
Percent of students living on campus	38%	53%	24%	24%	70%
Alcohol Law Arrests	43	103	0	19	38
Alcohol Law Disciplinary Action	383	193	72	149	857
Drug Abuse Arrests	32	27	0	14	218
Drug Abuse Disciplinary Action	92	47	20	147	187
Rape	0	5	0	0	38

NOTE: The most recent Clery Report data for all universities is the 2015 report. The above data is all relative to the 2015 Clery Report statistics. The percent of students living on campus is calculated with 2015 fall enrollment and housing data also.

CHART | SANDRA GOMEZ-ACEVES

Department said he will often talk with the other universities but noted each institution requires different enforcement.

"Each is unique in itself," Erwin said. "It's different ways of policing depending on where you're located and what is happening."

Each university also has a different population of their students living in on-campus housing. In 2015, the same year of the Clery Report data, nearly 70 percent of students enrolled at UConn's Storrs campus lived in campus-monitored housing. That figure significantly decreases when looking at the four other public universities. In that same year, Southern housed 38 percent, Eastern housed 53 percent, while Western and Central each housed 24 percent of their enrollees.

At Eastern, its location in Willimantic

office commonly addresses drug and alcohol violations on UConn's campus.

"Whenever we are called," said Silver, "it gets referred to community standards, in addition to being arrested if they're minors."

At Western, police and administrators follow a "three-strike rule." The first time offense, is a "slap on the hand" such as community service or counseling. A second time offense would be more serious and once a student gets to their third strike, Western's Police Department's Lt Richard Montefusco said he can almost guarantee a student will be kicked out of the university.

Piscitelli said Southern does not prescribe to a three strike rigged system when handling students. "I don't work in a world that rigged," he said. "I like to work in a world where we're trying to address where the student is and how we



Visit [YouTube.com/SouthernCT](https://www.youtube.com/SouthernCT) for a video report on the project.