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**HIGH RISK STUDENTS:**  
COMPARISON OF THE PERCENT OF DRINKING STUDENTS WHO EXHIBITED  
BEHAVIOR RELATED TO DRINKING DURING 1987-1988

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**Abstract**

The *purpose* of this brief report was to describe possible high risk students for drinking problems by personal, academic and institutional demographic variables. *Methods:* A national sample of college students during the 1987-1988 academic year at institutions that have previously partaken in a study of post-secondary colleges and universities drinking patterns and problems since 1982 completed the Student Alcohol Questionnaire (SAQ). *Results:* in this sample of around 3,400 students, who drank at least once a year, it was found that a significant ( $p < .05$ ) higher percent of males, whites, Roman Catholic and Protestants whose religion allowed drinking, those to whom religion was not important, had a low grade point average, were freshmen, those living in the North East, were heavy or "at risk" drinkers exhibited problems related to alcohol. These results are reported in tables.

**Background**

This brief presentation, consisting primarily of tables, is part of a larger study of university students drinking patterns and problems related to alcohol. Various demographic variables such as gender, race, religion and religiosity, Grade point Average and other personal, academic or institutional variables have been shown to be associated with problematic drinking behaviors. Thus the purpose of this report was to assess current drinking patterns to give guidance for curriculum planning or alcohol intervention for groups of high risk students,

## Methods

The *Student Alcohol Questionnaire* (SAQ) which includes demographic items, questions regarding the consumption of alcohol, and 18 items concerning possible consequences of drinking was used for the study. It was administered to students at institutions that is part of a long term study of university students drinking behaviors during the 1987-88 academic year. Instructions to students explained the voluntary nature of participation as approved by the Indiana University Human Subjects Committee. The sample included over 4000 students at 82 institutions which represent four year college and universities in all states. It was drawn from in-class administration in survey-type sociology, health or physical education courses. These classes had a high probability of containing students from every academic major and class year. The response rate exceeded 98% and the demographic composition of the resulting sample closely approximated that of students attending baccalaureate institutions of higher learning in the United States.

## Results

For personal demographic variables, as has been found in other studies, a significantly higher proportion of males (33%) were heavy drinkers (consuming five or more drinks at any on sitting once a week or more) compared to females (12%). Of drinkers (consuming alcohol at least once during the past 12 months) a higher percent of males reported exhibiting problems related to dinking. About a half had exhibited drinking and driving related issues. Among whites a significantly higher percent exhibited six of the 18 problems related to drinking compared to non-whites. Roman Catholic and Protestant groups, that allow drinking, exhibited a significantly higher percent of problems related to drinking including hangovers and driving a car after drinking. A significantly higher percent of Roman Catholics missed class because of hangover and about 33% percent were heavy drinkers. A higher percent of those who did not consider religion important exhibited hangovers and had come to class after drinking. There was no significant difference with the other problems related to alcohol consumption.

When academic/social characteristics were examined, it was found that when year in school was compared, a significantly higher proportion of freshmen reported vomiting and being in trouble with the law because of drinking compared to other class years. On the other hand, a higher percent of seniors reported they had missed class because of hangovers and driven a car after drinking. Almost a half of those with a grade point average (GPA) under 2.0 were heavy drinkers compared to 12 percent of those with a GPA of 4.0, or an "A." For issues such as low grade, cutting class because of drinking, or missing class because of hangovers, an inverse progression was found from the highest to the lowest GPA. The lower the GPA the higher the percent of students exhibited these behaviors. For

ten of the 18 problems, the highest percent reporting problems tended to be those with a 2.5 or lower GPA. No other significant differences were found for any of these academic characteristics.

In regards to institutional characteristics, students in the North Central region of the country exhibited a significantly higher percent of hangovers and missing class due to hangovers. However, the North East had a significantly higher percent of heavy drinkers compare to the other regions of the country.

### **Conclusions**

The results of this study reflect many other studies by the authors and others who have found that being a male, white, Roman Catholic or mainstream Protestant, not religious, having a low grade point average, and from the North Central part of the country is associated with being a high risk drinker. Educational programs on the school and community level need to address these individuals with programs tailored to these individuals.

### **The following are some presented papers related to this paper which have detailed references that are found in the IUScholarWorks Repository**

Engs, Ruth C. (1994) Drinking patterns of American university student: testing reduction of consumption theory 1982-1994. Paper Presented, Department of Psychology, Research Colloquium, University of Dundee, Dundee, Scotland, October, 1994. Located in IUScholarWorks repository: <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/17314>

Engs, R.C and Hanson, D.J. (1993) Drinking games among moderate and heavy drinkers: influence of demographic variables . Paper presented: American School Health Association, Pittsburgh, PA, October. 1993. Located in IUScholarWorks Repository: <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/17299>

Engs, Ruth C. (1992) An updated reliability of the student alcohol questionnaire (SAQ) for researchers. Bloomington, IN: White Paper, 1992. Located in IUScholarWorks repository: <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/17182>

Engs, R. C., Glicksman, L and Smythe, C. (1990) Alcohol use and associated problems: American vs Canadian students. Implications for public policy Paper Presented: ICAA Congress, Berlin, Germany, June, 1990. Located in IUScholarWorks repository at <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/17233>

Engs, R.C. & Hanson, D.J.(1988) Reactance theory and drinking legislation. Paper Presented: Annual Meeting, Eastern Sociological Association, New York, October 8, 1988. Located in IUScholarworks repository: <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/172967>

Engs, R.C. & Hanson, D.J. (1988) Drinking patterns of university students over a seven year time period: The Effect of Raising the Drinking Age. Paper presented 35th International Congress on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence. Oslo, 31 July - 6 August, 1988. Located in IUScholarworks repository: <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/17296>

Engs, Ruth C. (1987) Drinking patterns and problems of college women. National Conference on Women's Issues, Alcohol Drug Problem Association (ADPA), Denver, May 4, 1987. Located in IUScholarworks repository: <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/17286>

Engs, R.C. Hanson, D.J. (1986) Correlates of drinking problems and knowledge of alcohol among collegians over time: implications for education, in policy and the college community. Paper presented: NIAAA/NIDA First National Conference on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Washington, D.C., August 6, 1986. Located in IUScholarworks repository: <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/17285>

Engs, R.C and Hanson, D.J. (1983) The drinking patterns and problems of college students - 1983: Paper presented: ADPA National Conference, Washington, D.C., August 29, 1983. Located in IUScholarWorks repository: <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/17281>

Engs, R.C. (1983) College student drinking patterns over time: 1974-1983. Paper presented: ADPA Higher Education Conference, March 1, 1983, Chicago. IL. Located in IUScholarworks repository: <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/172812>

Engs, Ruth C. (1979) A national study of drinking patterns among university students. Paper presented: 32nd International Congress on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, Warsaw Poland September, 1979. Located in the IUScholarWorks repository at <http://hdl.handle.net/2022/17154>

## TABLES

Comparison of the percent of drinking students who exhibited behavior related to drinking during 1987-1988.

	<b>SEX</b>	
	<u>Males</u> (n = 1338)	<u>Females</u> (n = 2021)
<b>Drinkers:</b>		
* Hangover	79.2	73.2
Vomiting	53.6	47.1
* Drive car after drinking	58.1	42.6
* Drive car after knowing had too much to drink	42.2	27.9
* Drink while driving	47.9	29.4
* Come to class after drinking	10.6	6.7
* Cut class because of drinking	11.9	6.9
* Missed class because of hangover	30.6	23.5
Stopped for DWI	2.1	1.2
Criticized by friend for drinking too much	15.9	11.5
* Trouble with law	10.1	3.2
* Lower grade	7.3	4.0
Problems with school administration	4.0	2.0
* Gotten into fight due to drinking	20.7	10.2
* Think have problem with drinking	13.2	7.5
* Damage to school property due to drinking	19.9	4.8
Lost job because of drinking	1.1	0.9
* Heavy drinking among drinkers	39.1	15.9
<b>All Students:</b>		
* Heavy drinking (>5 drinks at one sitting once a week or more)	33.1	12.0
* Drinking (drink at least once during past 12 months)	84.6	75.3

\* p &lt; .05

Comparison of the percent of drinking students who exhibited behavior related to drinking during 1987-1988

Drinkers:	RACE	
	<u>White</u>	<u>Non-white</u>
* Hangovers	77.5	51.5
Vomiting	50.9	36.7
* Drive car after drinking	50.7	33.0
* Drive cart after knowing had too much to drink	33.5	19.4
* Drink while driving	38.6	20.4
Came to class after drinking	8.6	1.9
Cut class because of drinking	9.3	8.2
* Missed class because of hangover	29.7	7.1
Stopped for DWI	1.5	2.1
Criticized by friend for drinking Too much	13.2	17.3
Trouble with the law	6.3	5.1
Lower grade	5.4	3.1
Problem with school administration	2.9	1.0
Gotten into fight due to drinking	15.0	10.2
Think have problem with drinking	10.3	3.1
Damage to school property due to drinking	11.6	6.1
Lost job because of drinking	0.9	2.0
* Heavy drinking among drinkers	27.2	9.9
All Students:		
* Heavy drinking (>5 drinks at one sitting once a week or more)	22.3	5.3
* Drinking (drink at least once during Past 12 months)	82.0	51.5

Comparison of the percent of drinking students who exhibited behavior related to drinking during 1987-1988.

	RELIGION			
	<u>Roman Catholic</u>	<u>Jews</u>	<u>Protestant allow drink</u>	<u>Protestant not allow drink</u>
	(n=1237)	(n=78)	(n=1106)	(n=477)
<b>Drinkers:</b>				
* Hangover	77.3	73.9	78.2	64.2
Vomiting	53.4	46.4	49.9	40.6
* Drive car after drinking	49.7	46.4	52.6	38.0
Drive car after knowing had too much to drink	34.5	29.0	35.4	29.2
Drink while driving	37.0	24.6	38.9	33.6
Come to class after drinking	8.6	5.8	8.1	7.7
Cut class because of drinking	9.6	11.6	9.9	6.6
* Missed class because of hangover	31.3	30.4	25.9	15.9
Stopped for DWI	1.9	2.9	1.0	1.9
Criticized by friend for drinking too much	13.7	11.6	12.7	13.3
Trouble with law	7.3	5.8	5.0	6.6
Lower grade	6.2	5.8	4.1	3.7
Problems with school administration	4.1	1.4	2.1	2.2
Gotten into fight due to drinking	15.7	18.8	14.3	11.8
Think have problem with drinking	10.9	10.1	8.6	10.7
Damage to school property due to drinking	13.5	13.0	9.6	7.4
Lost job because of drinking	1.1	1.4	.8	1.5
* Heavy drinking among drinkers	32.5	27.5	22.8	13.6
<b>All Students:</b>				
* Heavy drinking (>5 drinks at one sitting once a week or more)	28.1	24.4	19.1	7.8
* Drinking (drink at least one during past 12 months)	86.3	88.5	83.8	57.2



Comparison of the percent of drinking students who exhibited behavior related to drinking during 1987-1988.

**Importance of Religion**

	<u>Very Important</u> (n=2212)	<u>Not Important</u> (n=1139)
<b>Drinkers:</b>		
* Hangover	73.5	79.6
Vomiting	49.2	51.0
Drive car after drinking	48.2	50.7
Drive car after knowing had too much to drink	32.1	36.9
Drink while driving	35.5	40.1
* Come to class after drinking	7.0	10.8
Cut class because of drinking	8.2	10.5
Missed class because of hangover	25.6	27.9
Stopped for DWI	1.5	1.6
Criticized by friend for drinking too much	12.6	14.5
Trouble with law	5.6	6.9
Lower grade	5.2	5.8
Problems with school administration	2.8	2.8
Gotten into fight due to drinking	14.1	15.6
Think have problem with drinking	9.3	10.7
Damage to school property due to drinking	10.5	12.7
Lost job because of drinking	1.2	0.7
Heavy drinking among drinkers	24.3	28.3
<b>All Students:</b>		
* Heavy drinking (>5 drinks at one sitting once a week or more)	18.1	24.8
* Drinking (drink at least one during past 12 months)	74.6	87.9

Comparison of the percent of drinking students who exhibited behavior related to drinking during 1987-1988.

	CLASS			
	<u>Fresh</u>	<u>Soph</u>	<u>Junior</u>	<u>Senior</u>
	(n=884)	(n=846)	(n=858)	(n=707)
<b>Drinkers:</b>				
Hangover	73.5	76.4	77.0	78.5
* Vomiting	55.2	54.0	49.4	41.7
* Drive car after drinking	44.1	46.0	51.7	56.9
Drive car after knowing had too much to drink	30.2	31.7	36.4	39.6
Drink while driving	35.9	34.3	37.8	42.9
Come to class after drinking	10.5	7.4	6.8	9.8
Cut class because of drinking	6.9	7.9	10.7	11.9
* Missed class because of hangover	16.9	26.9	31.6	33.3
Stopped for DWI	1.3	1.4	2.1	1.7
Criticized by friend for drinking too much	13.4	14.8	13.8	11.9
* Trouble with law	9.3	5.4	6.7	3.3
Lower grade	4.3	7.3	6.7	3.5
Problems with school administration	2.7	2.7	4.6	1.6
Gotten into fight due to drinking	17.5	13.5	14.4	14.1
Think have problem with drinking	8.5	10.6	10.0	11.3
Damage to school property due to drinking	13.4	11.7	11.6	8.9
Lost job because of drinking	0.9	0.5	1.8	0.7
Heavy drinking among drinkers	27.1	26.0	29.3	22.1
<b>All Students:</b>				
* Heavy drinking (>5 drinks at one sitting once a week or more)	20.9	20.4	23.2	18.1
Drinking (drink at least one during past 12 months)	77.3	78.7	79.1	81.9

Comparison of the percent of drinking students who exhibited behavior related to drinking during 1987-1988.

	Grade Point Average					
	<u>4.0</u>	<u>3.5</u>	<u>3.0</u>	<u>2.5</u>	<u>2.0</u>	<u>LT 2.0</u>
	(n=108)	(n=605)	(n=1285)	(n=1032)	(n=242)	(n=46)
<b>Drinkers:</b>						
* Hangover	54.4	68.6	73.8	81.9	82.7	75.7
* Vomiting	36.8	42.3	47.3	54.4	60.5	81.1
* Drive car after drinking	30.9	44.7	48.1	52.3	56.4	64.9
Drive car after knowing had too much to drink	22.1	29.8	34.1	35.5	40.0	52.8
* Drink while driving	27.9	31.7	34.7	40.7	48.7	51.4
Come to class after drinking	11.8	5.7	7.7	8.7	13.8	18.9
* Cut class because of drinking	1.5	6.4	7.2	11.6	14.4	24.3
* Missed class because of hangover	10.3	16.0	23.7	33.2	39.0	43.2
Stopped for DWI	5.9	1.0	1.3	1.7	2.1	0
Criticized by friend for drinking too much	11.8	12.1	12.3	13.4	21.0	21.6
* Trouble with law	5.9	3.8	3.9	8.7	9.2	24.3
* Lower grade	4.4	2.1	2.9	6.8	17.4	21.6
Problems with school administration	4.4	1.0	2.4	3.6	5.1	8.1
Gotten into fight due to drinking	8.8	9.3	14.5	17.4	18.5	18.9
Think have problem with drinking	8.8	8.3	8.9	10.7	14.4	18.9
* Damage to school property due to drinking	6.0	5.2	9.4	14.6	19.0	27.0
Lost job because of drinking	4.4	0.5	0.6	1.2	2.1	2.7
* Heavy drinking among drinkers	11.8	13.5	24.5	29.9	43.4	47.4
<b>All Students:</b>						
* Heavy drinking (>5 drinks at one sitting once a week or more)	7.4	9.4	19.6	25.2	35.1	39.1
* Drinking (drink at least once during past 12 months)	63.0	69.8	80.2	84.2	81.0	82.6

Comparison of the percent of drinking students who exhibited behavior related to drinking during 1987-1988.

	REGION			
	<u>NE</u>	<u>NC</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>
	(n=990)	(n=709)	(n=749)	(n=927)
<b>Drinkers:</b>				
* Hangover	76.1	79.6	68.9	77.2
Vomiting	51.4	54.0	43.8	49.1
Drive car after drinking	45.1	54.1	48.0	51.0
Drive car after knowing had too much to drink	30.0	39.2	34.5	34.0
Drink while driving	33.1	37.4	43.1	37.8
Come to class after drinking	8.8	10.4	7.5	7.1
Cut class because of drinking	10.7	10.9	7.5	6.8
* Missed class because of hangover	27.8	32.3	23.7	22.2
Stopped for DWI	1.4	1.4	1.9	1.7
Criticized by friend for drinking too much	11.2	14.6	14.6	14.1
Trouble with law	5.3	7.6	6.1	6.2
Lower grade	5.4	7.1	3.6	5.3
Problems with school administration	3.7	4.1	1.3	2.2
Gotten into fight due to drinking	15.1	16.3	14.2	13.4
Think have problem with drinking	9.7	9.8	10.7	9.7
Damage to school property due to drinking	11.8	11.4	11.9	10.3
Lost job because of drinking	0.4	1.5	1.0	1.3
* Heavy drinking among drinkers	30.8	29.5	22.5	19.5
<b>All Students:</b>				
* Heavy drinking (>5 drinks at one sitting once a week or more)	26.2	24.5	15.9	14.7
* Drinking (drink at least one during past 12 months)	84.9	83.2	70.6	75.4