

State of California  
**Memorandum**



**Date:** August 19, 2011  
**To:** New Students  
Cal Poly  
College of Science and Mathematics

**From:** Philip S. Bailey, Dean  
College of Science and Mathematics

**Subject:** **Alcohol**

As your dean I want to be positive and encouraging as you enter Cal Poly as a new student this fall. However, excessive alcohol consumption by students is a serious problem confronting American universities and I feel I should discuss this with our new students. Cal Poly attracts some of the brightest students in California and the United States and enjoys a national reputation for academic excellence and success. However, the alcohol problem is indiscriminate; Cal Poly has the same challenges as other universities. Here are some national statistics describing problems of college students related to alcohol consumption:

- 14% Trouble with police, residence halls, or college authorities
- 31% Involved in fight or serious argument
- 33% Driven under the influence of alcohol (1.5% arrested for DUI/DWI)
- 8.2% Damaged property or fire alarm
- 24% Performed poorly on an exam or important project
- 33% Missed class
- 21% Drank 10 times or more in 30 day period
- 47% Had five or more drinks in one setting in the past two weeks
- 40% Often binge drink when drinking (5 or more drinks at a sitting)
- 32% Had a memory loss in the last year because of drinking
- 53% Nauseated or vomited in the last year because of drinking

Violence, arrest, incarceration, sexual assault, pregnancy, accidents, injury, death...these are among the most serious results of excessive alcohol consumption and they happen to college students at universities all across the country, including Cal Poly. Not as dramatic, but more prevalent and very sad, is the failure of many students to achieve their personal and intellectual potential or even come close to it. Many doors to life's opportunities close forever as a result.

As serious and troublesome as the statistics above are, they also reveal that a large majority of college students do not have these problems. My advice to you:

- Think! Do not succumb to peer pressure or the excitement of a moment.
- If you drink, drink moderately and act responsibly.
- Be safe! Make sure you are always in control of yourself. Try to avoid being with people who are not in control of themselves.
- Remember, most students try to act responsibly and treat others with respect. This is the group with which you want to be identified.

I wish you the best as you begin your first year at Cal Poly and will support you in any way I can. I hope you will take full advantage of the many opportunities for personal and intellectual growth that Cal Poly has to offer. Good luck and please try to be healthy and safe.