

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION**

Unitek College is committed to fostering and maintaining an environment for students and employees that is free of drugs and alcohol. Therefore, Unitek College (or “the College”) prohibits the illegal and irresponsible use of alcohol and drugs and will strictly enforce federal, state and local laws, as well as the College’s own policies and procedures which support these laws. Specifically, as a matter of policy, the College prohibits the following:

- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or substances, including illegally obtained prescription drugs, while on College premises
- Being under the influence of legal prescription or non-prescription drugs while on College premises, if doing so could impair judgment or motor functions or place persons or property in jeopardy
- The illegal use, sale, manufacture, possession, distribution, transfer, purchase, or storage of alcoholic beverages or drugs on College premises, or in automobiles or any other vehicle parked on College premises
- Advertising or promoting alcohol or alcohol events on College premises.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including expulsion or termination, upon violation of any of these policies, regardless of whether it is a first offense. Additionally, violations of the law will also be referred to the applicable law enforcement authorities.

Unitek uses the following definitions when determining if a student or employee may be impaired. A student or employee who meets any one (1) or all of the following criteria will be identified as impaired:

1. The individual is, or appears to the reasonable observer to be, under the influence of alcohol and/or other drugs in the classroom, clinical, externship, or other campus or professional setting.
2. The individual is discovered using or is found to be in possession of any illicit substance on College premises, externship or clinical site, or at any event which utilizes the College’s name.
3. The individual poses a danger to himself/herself or others or displays behavior that is disruptive to the goals of the individual’s professional and/or academic programs in association with the observed or alleged improper use of alcohol or drugs.

Also included within this policy document is a summary of the legal sanctions commonly imposed by local, state and federal authorities for the illegal use of alcohol and drugs. Any student who is convicted of any drug law violation must notify his or her Campus Director or Program Director within five (5) days of the conviction. Additionally, students convicted of any drug law violation or students found to be engaged in substance abuse may be referred to abuse help centers for counseling and rehabilitation. In that event, continued enrollment may be subject to successful completion of any prescribed counseling or treatment program. Employees of Unitek College may refer to the most current Employee Handbook for guidelines on drugs and alcohol in the workplace and how their employment may be affected.

Aside from complying with federal, state and local laws regarding alcohol and drugs, the College is concerned with the health and well-being of members of our College community. Students may contact the Campus Director or Program Director confidentially for referrals or information regarding available counseling, treatment, or rehabilitation programs. Additionally, the College refers all students in need of drug and/or alcohol abuse counseling to WellConnect, a free counseling service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to all enrolled Unitek College students. Students are encouraged to call 1-866-640-4777 or visit <https://wellconnectbysrs.com>.

## **SUMMARY OF LEGAL SANCTIONS RELATING TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The illegal use of drugs or alcohol is a serious crime under federal, state and local laws. In every state, it is unlawful to sell, furnish, or provide alcohol to a person under the age of 21. Additionally, the possession of alcohol by anyone under the age of 21 in a public place or a place open to the public is generally illegal. Driving while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol is also illegal, regardless of age. State laws also prohibit the unlawful possession, distribution, and use of controlled substances and drugs, as defined in each jurisdiction.

Federal laws also prohibit the unlawful possession, distribution and use of controlled substances and drugs, which includes making it a crime to possess drugs (including in your car, backpack, purse, or home), to hold someone else's drugs, or to be in a home or place where individuals are using drugs.

Our campus communities should be aware of the serious legal penalties imposed for convictions in cases of alcohol or drug abuse. These convictions may lead to imprisonment, fines, and community service. Additionally, courts do not suspend prison sentences so that convicted persons can attend school or continue with employment. Offenses are designated as either misdemeanors or felonies, depending on the type of offense and the substances that were involved. Specific sanctions under federal, state and/or local laws include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Prison sentence
- Monetary fines
- Mandated community service
- Seizure of property
- Suspension, revocation or denial of a driver's license

An individual convicted of drug possession under state or federal laws are ineligible for federal loans and grants for up to one (1) year after the first conviction and five (5) years after the second. Additionally, an individual who is convicted of a felony may also experience significant difficulty in obtaining or maintaining employment. Under federal laws, distribution of drugs to individuals under the age of 21 is punishable by twice the normal penalty with a mandatory one (1) year in prison. Federal laws set substantially higher prison sentences for the manufacture and distribution of drugs if death or serious injury results from the use of the substance.

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE PREVENTION AND AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

As indicated earlier, students are urged to call 1-866-640-4777 or visit <https://wellconnectbysrs.com> for help in dealing with drug and/or alcohol abuse and/or addiction. In addition, there are many organizations which offer drug and alcohol abuse education and prevention programs, some of which are listed on the next page. The College recommends that anyone who detects definitive signs of substance abuse in another student or employee should contact management. If management determines that a student or employee is in need of assistance, he or she may be counseled to seek assistance through the WellConnect counseling service provided for all enrolled students or referred to outside agencies, such as those listed on the next page. All referrals made by the College will remain confidential.

## ABUSE PREVENTION RESOURCES

- Sober Solutions, 1-888-762-3730, <http://www.sober-solutions.com/>
- Start Your Recovery, 1-800-662-4357, <https://startyourrecovery.org/>
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse, 1-844-USA-GOV1, <https://www.usa.gov/mental-health-substance-abuse>
- Al-Anon Family Groups, 1-888-425-2666, <http://www.al-anon.org/>
- For a directory of substance use disorder resources in California, please see [Start Your Recovery: Substance Use Disorder Resources](#)

## HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE

Alcohol and drugs are toxic substances which affect the mind, body and spirit. Excessive drinking can cause health risks which include damage to your body organs, impaired physiological responses, mental and emotional disorders, and in very high doses, respiratory depression and death. Drug abuse is dangerous and can lead to psychosis, convulsions, coma and death. Continuous use of drugs can lead to organ damage, mental illness, and malnutrition. The chart below sets out in more detail health risks associated with different forms of substance abuse:

<b>Alcohol</b>
Alcohol consumption causes marked changes in behavior. Even small amounts of alcohol can significantly impair judgment, reaction time and coordination needed to safely operate equipment or drive a car. Signs and symptoms of abuse include: dulled mental processes, lack of coordination, slow reaction time, poor judgment, and reduced inhibitions. Low to moderate doses of alcohol may increase the incidence of aggressive acts. Moderate to high doses of alcohol cause marked impairments in higher mental functions, severely altering a person's ability to learn and remember information. Very high doses cause respiratory depression and death. Long-term consumption of large quantities of alcohol, particularly when combined with poor nutrition, can also lead to permanent damage to vital organs such as the brain and the liver.
<b>Marijuana</b>
All forms of marijuana have negative physical and mental effects. Research also shows that people do not retain knowledge when they are "high." Motivation and cognition may be altered, making the acquisition of new information difficult. Marijuana can also produce paranoia and psychosis. Because users often inhale the unfiltered smoke deeply and then hold it in their lungs as long as possible, marijuana is damaging to the lungs and pulmonary system. Marijuana smoke contains more cancer causing agents than tobacco smoke. Long-term users of marijuana may develop tolerance levels requiring more and more marijuana to achieve the same "high."
<b>Inhalants</b>
Inhalants are mood-altering substances that are voluntarily inhaled. Because they are common products, inhalants often are a person's first attempt at "getting high." Inhaling solvents allows the substance to reach the bloodstream quickly. The immediate negative effects of inhalants include: nausea, sneezing, coughing, nosebleeds, fatigue, poor coordination, and loss of appetite. Deeply inhaling the vapors, or using large amounts over a short time, may result in disorientation, violent behavior, unconsciousness, or death. High concentrations of inhalants can cause suffocation by displacing the oxygen in the lungs or depressing the central nervous system to the point that breathing stops.
<b>Cocaine</b>
Cocaine is the most potent stimulant of organic origin and the most widely used. Cocaine is a powerfully addictive drug leading to physical and psychological dependence. Signs and symptoms of use include: dilated pupils, increased pulse rate, elevated blood pressure, insomnia, loss of appetite, tactile hallucinations, paranoia, seizures, anxiety, mood swings, and difficulty in concentration. Immediate effects include dilated pupils and elevated blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate and body temperature. In addition, cocaine use can lead to death by cardiac arrest or respiratory failure. Chronic use can ulcerate the mucous membrane of the nose. Using contaminated needles to inject cocaine or other substances can transmit HIV and cause HIV/AIDS, hepatitis and other diseases.

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## HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE, cont'd

<b>Other Stimulants</b>
Stimulants are drugs that stimulate the central nervous system. Methamphetamine or crank is one of the fastest growing drugs of abuse. These drugs create less intense cocaine-like effects in the body. Signs and symptoms of use include: impaired concentration, impaired mental functioning, and swings between apathy and alertness. In addition, users report feeling restless, anxious and moody. Higher doses intensify the effects. Persons who use large amounts of amphetamines over a long period of time can develop an amphetamine psychosis that includes hallucinations, delusions and paranoia. An amphetamine injection creates a sudden increase in blood pressure that can result in stroke, very high fever or heart failure. Also, injection using contaminated needles may result in needle-related diseases such as AIDS and hepatitis.
<b>Depressants</b>
A depressant is a drug that depresses the central nervous system. Taken as prescribed by physicians, they can be beneficial for the relief of anxiety, irritability, and stress. The effects of depressants are somewhat similar to the effects of alcohol. Small amounts can produce calmness and relaxed muscles, but larger doses can cause: slurred speech, staggered walk, altered perception, respiratory depression, coma and death. The combination of depressants and alcohol can multiply the effects, thereby multiplying the risks. The use of depressants can cause both physical and psychological dependence. Regular use over time may result in a tolerance to the drug, leading the user to increase the quantity consumed. Depressants are known as: barbiturates, downers and tranquilizers, such as Valium, Librium, Equanil, Serax, Tranxene and Zanax.
<b>Hallucinogens</b>
Hallucinogenic drugs distort the senses and often produce hallucinations, experiences that depart from reality. Phencyclidine (PCP) interrupts the function of the neurocortex, the section of the brain that controls the intellect and keeps instincts in check, because the drug blocks pain receptors. Violent PCP episodes may result in self-inflicted injuries. Signs and symptoms of use include: impaired concentration, confusion, agitation, muscle rigidity and profuse sweating. Lysergic acid (LSD), mescaline and psilocybin also are hallucinogens that cause illusions and hallucinations. Physical effects may include dilated pupils, elevated body temperature, increased heart rate and blood pressure, loss of appetite, sleeplessness and tremors. A bad psychological reaction to LSD, mescaline and psilocybin is common. The user may experience panic, confusion, suspicion, anxiety and loss of control. Delayed effects can occur even after use has ceased.
<b>Narcotics</b>
Narcotic analgesics are the most effective compounds used for pain relief. Narcotic analgesics include Opium, Opiates (morphine, codeine, Percodan, heroin and dilaudid) and Opioids (synthetic substitutes such as Vicodin, Darvon, Demerol, and methadone). Narcotics initially produce a feeling of euphoria that is often followed by: drowsiness, nausea and vomiting, constricted pupils, watery eyes and itching, low and shallow breathing, clammy skin, impaired respiration, convulsions, coma, and possible death. Narcotics can be eaten, injected, taken orally, smoked or inhaled. Tolerance to narcotics develops rapidly and addiction is likely. The use of contaminated syringes may result in diseases such as HIV/AIDS, endocarditis and hepatitis. Addiction in pregnant women can lead to premature, stillborn, or addicted infants who experience severe withdrawal symptoms.