

Rowan University

## Rowan Digital Works

---

Theses and Dissertations

---

9-1-2005

# The most effective PR/advertising techniques in disseminating an alcohol social norms campaign

Christine Anna DiBlasi  
*Rowan University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd>



Part of the [Public Relations and Advertising Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

DiBlasi, Christine Anna, "The most effective PR/advertising techniques in disseminating an alcohol social norms campaign" (2005). *Theses and Dissertations*. 990.  
<https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd/990>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Rowan Digital Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Rowan Digital Works. For more information, please contact [graduateresearch@rowan.edu](mailto:graduateresearch@rowan.edu).

THE MOST EFFECTIVE PR/ADVERTISING TECHNIQUES IN DISSEMINATING  
AN ALCOHOL SOCIAL NORMS CAMPAIGN

by  
Christine Anna DiBlasi

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the  
Master of Arts Degree  
of  
The Graduate School  
at  
Rowan University  
May 12, 2005

Approved by

Date Approved September 1, 2005

## **ABSTRACT**

Christine Anna DiBlasi  
**THE MOST EFFECTIVE PR/ADVERTISING TECHNIQUES IN DISSEMINATING  
AN ALCOHOL SOCIAL NORMS CAMPAIGN**  
2005

Dr. Suzanne Sparks FitzGerald  
Master of Arts in Public Relations

The purpose of this study was to determine the most effective PR/Advertising techniques to disseminate an Alcohol Social Norms Campaign at college campuses. The techniques used were analyzed for their effectiveness in reaching students and decreasing binge drinking rates. Three New Jersey colleges were studied: Rowan University, Ramapo College of New Jersey and The College of New Jersey.

The researcher collected primary data from the brag books of the three colleges for the fiscal year 2004 Alcohol Social Norms Campaigns, personal interviews with the Project Directors of these campaigns, and focus groups comprised of college students. The research supported the hypotheses that certain PR/Advertising techniques applied to an Alcohol Social Norms Campaign will more effectively reach the greatest number of students and that by using the most effective techniques binge drinking rates will decrease.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my mother, Esther DiBlasi, for her love and support throughout my life. Thank you for your patience and understanding, but most of all for wanting me to be the best I can be in every aspect of my life. You have done more for me all of my life than anyone and I will always remember that.

To my sister and brother-in-law Stephanie and Bob Cahall for their support. To my niece Laura Cahall and my nephews Bobby and Danny Cahall. You inspire me and make me so proud to be your aunt. I cherish all the memories of the times we have shared. To my cousins Anthony and Ramona Sparano for your support and great humor that always makes me laugh so much. To my friend Frank Catalano for your generosity and support.

To my professors at Rowan, especially Suzanne Sparks FitzGerald, Joe Basso, Larry Litwin, and Don Bagin – Thank you for such an interesting and fun educational experience.

To my directors at work, Pamela and Michael Negro, Linda Jeffrey, and DeMond Miller. Thank you for your continued support in my job and my educational journey. To my coworker Marie Sparacio for her strong support and friendship. Thanks for listening to me and for being a true friend.

I also want to thank my father Enrico (Hank) J. DiBlasi, for whom education was so important. You always took the high road and had compassion for people. You were honest and humble and successful. I know you are proud of me.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Chapter 1

Importance of the Problem	1
Problem Statement	3
Delimitations	3
Purpose of the Study	4
Hypotheses	5
Procedure	5
Summary	6
Terminology	7

### Chapter 2

Overview of Literature	8
Social Norms	8
Alcohol Social Norms	8
Alcohol Social Norms Campaigns	10
PR/Advertising Techniques	10
PR/Advertising Techniques for Alcohol Social Norms Campaigns	11
The Messages	14
Positive vs. Negative	15

### Chapter 3

Data Needed	16
Data Sources	16
Data Collection	17
Data Analysis	18

### Chapter 4

Findings	19
Brag Books	19
Personal Interviews	24
Focus Groups	27
Posters	28
Ads	30
Contests	32
Events	33
Conclusion of Focus Panel 1	35

Posters	36
Ads	37
Contests	38
Events	38
Conclusion of Focus Panel 2	38
Conclusion	39
<b>Chapter 5</b>	
Summary	41
Conclusion	41
Recommendation	42
Recommendations for Further Research	42
Evaluation	43
<b>References</b>	44
<b>Appendixes</b>	
Appendix A. Core Institute Campus Survey of Alcohol and Other Drug Norms	47
Appendix B. Personal Interview Questions	53
Appendix C. Focus Panel Recruitment Fliers	55
Appendix D. Focus Panel Questions	58

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1: Rowan Basketball Poster	29
Figure 4.2: Rowan Elephant Poster	29
Figure 4.3: Rowan Winter Scene Poster	30
Figure 4.4: Rowan “Trick or Truth” Ad	30
Figure 4.5: Rowan “Polls Are In” Ad	31
Figure 4.6: Rowan “Mirror” Ad	31
Figure 4.7: Rowan Christmas Contest	32
Figure 4.8: Rowan Football Toss	33
Figure 4.9: Rowan Halloween Candy Event	34
Figure 4.10: Rowan Top Ten Misperceptions Event	34
Figure 4.11: Rowan Roll the Dice Event	35

## Chapter 1

### Importance of the Problem

The social norms theory is based on the belief that peer influence is due to incorrect misperceptions of attitudes and behaviors. Research supporting this theory claims that by reducing misperceptions, behavior will change. If college students believe that most students party and drink often, they will try to fit in with this perceived notion. When they are made aware that the majority of students drink moderately or not at all, they will follow that norm. Movies such as *Animal House* portray students as binge drinkers who do not care about their grades. But the reality is that most students do not binge drink. H. Wesley Perkins, a sociology professor at Hobart and Smith College, and one of the originators and leaders of the social norms approach to substance abuse prevention, says the approach seeks to establish what the reality of social behavior is and contrasts it with their perceptions. It predicts behavior based on actual and perceived norms (Perkins, 2003).

Binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks in one sitting for a male, four or more for a female. For the minority of students who binge drink, problems that may arise include harm to one's self or to others. Alcohol abuse is the number one health problem for college students in the United States. Each year many headlines feature the consequences of binge drinking on campuses. The abuse of alcohol has caused murders,



sexual assaults, physical assaults, drunk-driving accidents, underage drinking, incidents of unprotected sex which can lead to pregnancy and/or the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, property damage and alcohol poisoning. A college student in New Mexico died in November 2004 from alcohol poisoning after he celebrated his twenty-first birthday. Colleges spend thousands of dollars each year to repair damage done by intoxicated students.

Each year, the State of New Jersey awards grants to some NJ colleges to operate an alcohol social norms campaign. The New Jersey Higher Education Consortium on Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention and Education is housed at Rowan University. The campaigns are designed to reach the students and decrease binge drinking. A project director at each college is responsible for the grant and how the funds are spent. Graduate assistants or student workers usually play a major part in disseminating the campaign. Ads stating the actual norm are put in the college newspaper regularly. Creative posters are displayed in campus buildings, especially student centers to reach as many students as possible. Events, games, and contests also spread awareness and provoke students to talk about binge drinking. Giveaways and most prizes have a statistic inscribed on them. Prizes can vary from pens and tablets to mall certificates and CD players.

A survey from Southern Illinois University's Core Institute titled *Campus Survey of Alcohol and Other Drug Norms* is given to students in random spring semester classes (see Appendix A). This survey measures what students think is happening in relation to alcohol consumption on campus and what is actually happening. Results are evaluated and tabulated by the Core Institute in Illinois. Although the social norms messages are

getting through to some students, awareness problems still exist. More students, faculty, and staff need to have their perceptions corrected. What are the best public relations techniques to do this --- ads, posters, events, games, contests? This researcher will study fiscal year 2004 campaigns of three New Jersey colleges to find out which PR techniques worked most effectively. This information will benefit not only students so more of them can be reached, but also advertisers, project directors, psychologists, counselors and student affairs personnel.

### Problem Statement

This study explores the PR techniques used at three NJ colleges to find what works most effectively in reaching students and changing behavior. The research will test for message similarity as well as for the use of humor, direct or indirect messages and negative vs. positive messages.

Every college and university should be able to effectively spread awareness of social norms to the campus community. Freshman students especially need to know the facts since they typically believe more drinking goes on than actually does. According to Perkins, binge drinking has decreased over the past few years at colleges because of the social norms campaigns. The statistics prove that most students do not let drinking interfere with their classes or their jobs (Perkins, 2003).

### Delimitations

This study is limited to three colleges in New Jersey: Ramapo College of New Jersey (North), The College of New Jersey (Central), and Rowan University (South) and deals only with the PR launched messages used to correct students misperceptions of drinking behavior. Social norms on drugs or tobacco will not be studied. There will be

no study of New Jersey colleges or universities other than the three noted. This is not a nationwide study.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to assess and determine the effectiveness of PR techniques in disseminating an alcohol social norms campaign. Because the campaigns are designed to correct misperceptions among students, faculty, and staff, provoking conversations on the issue of drinking and perceptions among these groups is a major goal of the campaigns. PR practitioners reach more students, faculty and staff with effective messages that change binge drinking and behavior among college students.

At Rowan University, students were informed of the actual drinking norm through posters, fliers, and weekly multiple half-page student newspaper advertisements, as well as brief personal advertisements and student radio spots. The drinking norms were publicized on the back of theater programs for the campus center for the arts. Promotional items such as balloons, pens, Frisbees, highlighters, and magnets conveying the campus drinking norm were distributed to students. Print media and radio contests were held in which prizes were given to those who could accurately state the campus drinking rate. Residence halls were asked to compete in creating a poster concerning the campus-drinking rate. The resulting works were hung in the student center and the event was pictured in the campus yearbook. Many contests were held, modeled on the game show "Jeopardy" and incorporating drinking norms information at awareness events throughout the academic year. The Rowan University radio station and students from the communication department have been great resources for our social norms project. They have also developed arresting concepts for monthly student contests" (Linda Jeffrey as quoted by Perkins, 2003).

The study will reflect which techniques are most effective to spread awareness and correct misperceptions. By knowing what the best techniques are, PR practitioners can use the techniques to reach more students and correct their misperceptions. The

study hypothesizes that contests and events are most effective in spreading awareness to students. Some students may not read the college paper or notice the posters displayed on campus. But students pay attention when they can win cash or prizes, or participate in a fun event such as spin the wheel or a football toss. According to Edward Moore, author of the monograph *A Field Manual for Developing PR Events and Activities that Work*, successfully promoting activities involves excitement and getting participation and well-planned efforts will result in key audiences noticing key messages they will accept and ideally act on, (Moore, 2003).

## Hypotheses

H1: It is expected that certain PR/advertising techniques applied to alcohol social norms campaigns will most effectively reach the greatest number of college students. Perkins stated that a social norms effort must be campuswide for sustained impact and the entire campus environment needs to have a change of drinking norm perception. Efforts need to impact all students, not just a segment of the college community. Certain efforts are most effective and most wide-reaching to reach large and diverse student populations. (Perkins, 2003)

H2: It is expected that use of the most effective PR/advertising techniques will decrease binge drinking in the three case study campuses. According to Perkins, if the number of students who overestimate heavier drinking as normative behavior is reduced, the actual rates of heavier drinking will be reduced (Perkins, 2003).

## Procedure

A content analysis of the brag books from Ramapo College, The College of New Jersey, and Rowan University colleges will be reviewed. These brag books contain every

ad, poster, contest, and event held in fiscal year 2004. This researcher will conduct two focus panels to obtain qualitative information to back up the content analysis. The project directors of the colleges will be interviewed to provide a more in-depth analysis on their campaign strategies and techniques.

## Summary

The most effective PR/advertising techniques need to be used in alcohol social norms campaigns to reach the most students to correct misperceptions on drinking and change behavior. These efforts will lower the rates of binge drinking.

## Terminology

### Social Norms Theory

Peer influence is due to incorrect perceptions of attitudes and behaviors, but peer culture can be changed from within.

### Social Norms Campaign

A campaign to spread awareness to the campus community to correct misperceptions on students drinking, using PR techniques such as posters, ads, events, and contests.

### Brag Books

A binder that contains all of the ads, posters, fliers, event and contest materials of a college alcohol social norms campaign for a fiscal year.

### PR techniques

Ad: an advertisement

Contest: a competition, especially one in which Entrants perform separately and are rated by judges.

Event: a social gathering or activity; a contest

Game: an activity providing entertainment or amusement

Poster: a large, usually printed placard, bill or announcement, often illustrated, that is posted to advertise or publicize something.

### Binge drinking

Five or more drinks in one sitting for a male, four or more drinks for a female.

### Project Director

Coordinator of an alcohol social norms grant; duties include creating a budget, spending the funds appropriately, sending in monthly reports, approving ideas for the campaign and attending the required meetings

## Chapter 2

### Overview of Literature

A comprehensive literature review was conducted on public relations/advertising techniques and alcohol social norms.

### Social Norms

Social Norms are people's beliefs about the attitudes and behaviors that are normal, acceptable or even expected in a certain social context. In many situations, perception of norms can greatly influence behavior.

### Alcohol Social Norms

Many college students overestimate how much their peers drink and how often they drink. This misperception can create pressure for students to consume more alcohol as they try to fit in with the perceived norm (McMaster University Health Centre site, 2004). Some professors, faculty and staff also hold misperceptions. They believe students drink more than they actually do. Professors have said to a class that they will not give a test the next day since they all will be out partying that night. Statements like these enforce the misperception to the students. As the saying goes "everyone is doing it." Students seek acceptance through conformity to what they perceive as the behavioral norms (Jeffrey, 2000). But everyone is not doing it. Studies show that most students drink moderately or not at all (Core Institute Survey on Alcohol and Other Drug Norms).

The majority of students are responsible and attend classes, do their class work and hold down jobs. If most students drank as much as some people incorrectly believe, they would not be passing classes, much less graduating.

According to Perkins, misperceptions of peer norms exist on most college campuses. Students believe their peers drink more than they do and these misperceptions contribute significantly to the problem of substance abuse on campus. "In spite of a decade of heightened awareness and numerous prevention initiatives, alcohol abuse is still the most significant health and safety risk facing college students," (Jeffrey 2000). A study claims an average of four American college students die each year and 192 are raped or sexually assaulted daily as a result of binge drinking. These figures in a study were reported in "A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking on U.S. Campuses," published by the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Other findings include that one in 10 students said they had unprotected sex when drinking and two percent said they were too drunk to give consent before having sex (Contemporary Sexuality, 2002). Another study claims that a student who binged on alcohol three times in two weeks was seven times as likely as a non-binge drinker to get into trouble with the police, eight times as likely to damage property, six times as likely to be hurt or injured and five times as likely to have unplanned sex (Meyer, 2002).

One primary social influence factor is the setting where students live. They may live in group residence life halls (dorms) or fraternity or sorority houses, where there is much social contact. When drinking and the availability of alcohol is common in these settings, so is the persuasion to join the crowd (Baer, 1994).



But prevention strategies that reduce misperceptions have resulted in significant positive effects. People are influenced by their perceptions of norms. Survey studies have shown that when social marketing strategies are implemented, students' misperceptions on college binge-drinking were reduced as was their binge-drinking behavior (Perkins, 2003).

### Alcohol Social Norms Campaigns

Each year, several New Jersey colleges are selected to receive grant awards to conduct alcohol social norms campaigns on their campuses. The amount is usually \$12,000 for the fiscal year. The college project director is required to attend the six NJ Higher Education Consortium meetings, create a budget for the grant, and send in monthly reports to Rowan University. Rowan University distributes the grants and processes the reports for the state. Project directors usually employ graduate assistants or students to run the campaigns. These students create the ads, posters and contests and choose the giveaways and prizes, pending the director's approval. The Rowan University Center for Addiction Studies reserves a table each week in the student center to hold contests and distribute giveaways to students.

### PR/Advertising Techniques

Advertising is described in the dictionary as the activity of attracting public attention to a product or business, as by print, broadcast or electronic media. It is also described as designing and writing and to make known, call attention to, to warn or notify.

PR/Advertising techniques include radio, television and newspaper ads, internet websites, posters, contests and events. The Alcohol Social Norms campaigns strive to notify and

call attention to the facts of drinking on campus, just to provoke conversation among students and the college community.

### PR/Advertising Techniques for Alcohol Social Norms Campaigns

The PR techniques the colleges use are ads, posters, giveaways, contests and events. These techniques reference the alcohol social norms message, quoting a statistic or stating that the majority drink moderately or not at all. Ads are placed in the school newspaper regularly. Posters are displayed in student high-traffic areas, such as the student center. Giveaways have included pens, ice scrapers, t-shirts, calculators, Frisbees, candy and key chains. Contests involve the participation of the students, such as answering social norms questions or creating the best social norms poster. Rowan University held a contest three weeks before Christmas. The prize was a \$100 certificate to the mall. Students had to circle the two correct statements out of four on campus drinking and guess how many mints were in a jar. Prizes can include cash, certificates, watches, televisions, CD players, and DVD players.

Events are designed to attract the student population. Social norms expert Michael Haines of the National Social Norms Resource Center in Illinois facilitated an alcohol social norms training for the New Jersey college grantees in December 2004. He suggests that events are not titled as “non-alcoholic” events and if beverages are served they should not be called mocktails, but instead power drinks. Naming a contest or event as “non-alcoholic” can deter students from attending since they may feel it will not be fun or they may get lectured. Non-alcoholic fruit drinks were served at a spring luau event which included games at Rowan University in 2002.

According to Moore (2003), PR planners need to consider the following tactics to make the most of potential opportunities – events, publicity and managed media. Events need careful planning and they should attract and hold the attention of the target audience. He says “Critical to staging a successful event is planning the strategic message you want the activity to convey.” He also stated that successful PR efforts seek to meet objectives. Practitioners running activities understand that the power of an event lies in its ability to influence thought and action. A campaign that really works offers more than one-way dissemination of information. It investigates, engages, inspires and makes real change happen (Moore 2003). The contests and events are designed to do these things. They require student participation and feedback with face-to-face communication. Moore also states that activities at an event should only disseminate information that can be delivered, understood and remembered.

There is disagreement on which techniques work best in an alcohol social norms campaign. The project director at the College of New Jersey believes quality posters are the key, if there are informed individuals to follow up with conversations. The project director at Drew University believes that contests and events bring the most students out. She thinks it is effective because the students ask questions on the statistics and someone with a working knowledge of the campaign can answer their inquiries. It is important to keep in mind that a poster or contest that works well at one college may not work well at another college. Each campus is different. The overall message is the same, but it may be advertised humorously, neutrally, or directly.

There also is disagreement on whether the alcohol social norms campaigns as a whole are effective. Dr. Henry Wechsler of the Harvard School of Public Health in

Boston believes there has been little or no change in the heavy drinking patterns of students from the prevention efforts (Wechsler, 2002). But Perkins and many others disagree. An article titled *Social Norms Is Effective: Wechsler Study Flawed* claims that the method used to identify the schools using social norms programs was methodologically unsound and the only criterion used to identify such programs was the response to one item in a survey sent to school administrators in 2001. The question was whether or not the school had ever conducted a social norms campaign to decrease alcohol use and related problems, and if it had, the time period when the program was conducted. They were not asked if they conducted a comprehensive campaign, which required commitment and resources (National Social Norms Resource Center, 2003).

A baseline study began in 1998 which asked the question: During the academic year, how often have you seen or heard media messages (examples: radio spots, newspaper advertisements, poster, etc.) about binge drinking rates?

Table 1: Baseline Study for Messages

Year	Baseline: 1998 Before Media Campaign	1999 (after one- semester campaign)	2000 (after two- semester campaign)
a. never	63.68%	17.95%	17.51%
b. once or twice	14.13%	29.49%	27.43%
c. 3 -5 times	8.30%	24.57%	20.46%
d. 6 – 10 times	12.33%	12.61%	14.35%
e. more than 10 times	1.57%	14.74%	20.25%

Even after one semester of the media campaign, a large number of students had seen or heard media messages about the college drinking norm. After two semesters, one in five had seen or heard the messages more than ten times (Jeffrey, 2000). The campaigns strive to make the true drinking norms common knowledge to all students.

### The Messages

The messages the campaigns try to spread include the following: “Most Students Drink Moderately or Not At All,” “The Majority of Students have 0 to 4 Drinks When They Party,” and “Most Students Do Not Let Drinking Get in the Way of Their Responsibilities.” The campaigns use creative ads, posters, and contests to get these messages across. Ads and posters often use humor and graphics. Or they can sometimes be more direct. The contests often use statements on statistics for students to remember and repeat to win a prize. According to Michael Haines, some students may feel the college newspaper is a rag and not a credible source for good health information. He also believes posters and the message content should be changed often to keep them fresh with new ideas to convey the message. Students do not want to see the same poster and message over and over again.

Haines suggests that campaigns avoid using finger-pointing messages which state you should not do this, you should do that. Instead he stresses that the campaigns should emphasize what students are doing right. The majority of students do not have D.W.I. convictions and they do not commit crimes while intoxicated. Most students do not get alcohol poisoning, which is very rare, but a big liability risk for colleges. There were five deaths caused by alcohol poisoning on U.S. campuses in the fall of 2004, out of 13.6

million students. These stories make headline news and people perceive the problem as larger than it is in reality. A poster at one college lists what students do right:

- Most students count their drinks and watch out for friends
- Most students do not mix alcohol and medicine
- Most students will have a mix of alcohol and regular drinks

Preliminary studies have shown that campaigns showing gory drunk-driving accidents were less effective in convincing students not to binge drink than campaigns that emphasize the majority of students drink moderately or not at all (Contemporary Sexuality, 2002).

### Positive vs. Negative

The alcohol social norms campaigns use positive messages instead of negative ones. They try to stress what students do right and that the majority of students do not binge drink, get into trouble, or neglect their class work and responsibilities. The statistics are included in each technique, stating that the majority is responsible. The behavior of the minority who binge drink is noticed and remembered, not the behavior of the majority (Perkins, 2003). For example, students at a party will notice the two guys who are drunk and fighting or vomiting in the corner. But they will not remember the three girls on the couch drinking soda or the others who drink moderately.

This researcher will compare and analyze the PR techniques used in an alcohol social norms campaign to find which one is most effective. The most effective technique reaches the most students and conveys the intended message.

PR techniques will be used to obtain the data to be compared and analyzed for this study. This will show the effectiveness of the techniques used in the campaigns.

## Chapter 3

### Data Needed

This research will determine which PR techniques are most effective in an alcohol social norms campaign as well as which techniques reach the most students and deliver the intended message. Three techniques will be employed to uncover this information. A content analysis of the brag books of The College of New Jersey, Ramapo College of New Jersey, and Rowan University will be conducted. These books are a year-long compilation of the social norms campaigns. In-depth interviews with Project Directors in charge of the alcohol social norms campaigns at these universities will be held. Focus panels with college students will reveal which techniques and messages reach them.

### Data Sources

**Content Analysis:** This researcher will conduct a content analysis on the Brag Books of Rowan University, Ramapo College of New Jersey, and The College of New Jersey. All posters, ads, contents, events, and giveaways are filed in these books. The books will be evaluated and compared for the number of each technique used in the 2004 fiscal year. The messages will also be evaluated for tone: directness vs. indirectness, humor vs. seriousness, positive vs. negative.

**Personal Interviews:** This researcher will conduct in-depth interviews of the Project Directors of the Alcohol Social Norms campaigns: Pamela Negro of Rowan University, Joe Hadge of The College of New Jersey and Al Frech of Ramapo College of New Jersey. They will be asked the rates and percentages of binge drinking on their

campuses and if it has improved. They will be asked which PR techniques they think are most effective to reach the students and why. They will be asked why certain techniques work better and if the correct message gets delivered. They approve all posters, ads, events, and giveaways for their campaign and submit monthly reports for the State of New Jersey (see Appendix B).

**Focus Panels:** This researcher will conduct two focus groups at Rowan University. Each focus group will comprise eight students of various ages, sexes, races, and grade levels as well as involvement in college activities and groups. Letters, e-mails, or phone calls emphasizing the need for their participation will be used to recruit participants (see Appendix C). The focus groups will be held in a private, quiet room and refreshments will be offered. Participants will observe and evaluate Alcohol Social Norms posters, ads, contests, and events for feedback. They will be asked if they have seen the posters, ads, contests, or events before and what they perceive as the message. Also, they will be asked if the images are an accurate portrayal of the Rowan University student. The focus groups will be held prior to April 1, 2005.

### **Data Collection**

The focus panels will take place by April 1, 2005 at the Rowan University campus. Each panel will consist of eight students. The sessions will be tape recorded and a recorder will take notes. The content analysis will be conducted by April 8, 2005. A chart for the techniques and messages will be created. The personal interviews will be conducted by April 15, 2005.



## Data Analysis

The results of the focus groups will be compared and evaluated. The surveys will be tabulated and studied. The content analysis will identify which techniques were used and how often at each college. The Project Director interviews will be compared for similarities and differences in approaches campaigns and in their binge drinking rates and messages.

The research techniques will provide the data needed to prove if the hypotheses are supported or not.

## Chapter 4

### Findings

The research conducted does support both hypotheses. Certain PR/Advertising techniques in an alcohol social norms campaign are most effective in reaching the most people. Certain techniques work better at some colleges than others so it is vital for every college to know what works best on its campus. The College of New Jersey and Ramapo College of New Jersey find that posters reach more students. Rowan University finds that interactive contests and radio contests reach more students. The focus groups comprised of Rowan students reflected that contests and ads are most effective. Using the most effective techniques at each college decreased the binge-drinking rate or decreased the frequency of binge drinking and problematic behavior. Hypothesis 1: (certain PR/Advertising techniques applied to alcohol social norms campaigns will most effectively reach the greatest number of college students) was supported as evidenced in the following research findings.

### Brag Books

The brag books of each college contain everything produced for the fiscal year. They include the ads, posters, contests, events, newsletters, pamphlets, and giveaways. This researcher evaluated each brag book for tone, approach and mood of the messages for each technique. When evaluating tone, this researcher considered the style of expression for the mood. The mood reflects the attitude of the techniques.

Table 2: The College of New Jersey: Tone

Technique	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Ad #1 - #3	x		
Poster #1 - 3	x		
Contest #1	x		
Event #1 - #2	x		

As opposed to neutral and negative, the ads, posters, contest, and events for The College of New Jersey had a positive tone. As evidenced by the other two colleges as well, all the techniques use a positive tone.

Table 3: The College of New Jersey: Approach

Technique	Indirect	Direct
Ad #1 - #2		x
Ad #3	x	
Poster #1 - #2		x
Poster #3	x	
Contest #1	x	
Event #1 - #2	x	

The College of New Jersey used an indirect approach more often than a direct approach in their techniques. The other two colleges used a direct approach more often than an indirect approach.

Table 4: The College of New Jersey: Mood

Technique	Humorous	Serious
Ad #1 - 2		x
Ad #3	x	
Poster #1 - 2		x
Poster #3	x	
Contest #1		x
Event #1 - #2		x

The College of New Jersey used a predominantly serious mood in their techniques. As evidenced by the other two colleges, most techniques use a serious mood as opposed to humorous.

Table 5: Ramapo College of New Jersey: Tone

Technique	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Ad #1 - #15	x		
Poster #1 - #16	x		
Contest #1 - 2	x		
Event #1	x		
Flyer #1 - #3	x		
Pamphlet #1 - 2	x		

The ads, posters, contests, events, flyers and pamphlets for Ramapo College of New Jersey had a positive tone.

Table 6: Ramapo College of New Jersey: Approach

Technique	Indirect	Direct
Ad #1 - #15		x
Poster #1 - #16		x
Contest #1 - 2	x	
Event #1	x	
Flyer #1 - 3		x
Pamphlet #1 - #2		x

The ads, posters, flyers, and pamphlets for Ramapo College have a direct approach. The contests and the event used an indirect approach.

Table 7: Ramapo College of New Jersey: Mood

Technique	Humorous	Serious
Ad #1 - #15		x
Poster #1 - #16		x
Contest #1 - #2		x
Event #1		x
Flyer #1 - #3		x
Pamphlet #1 - #2		x

All of Ramapo's techniques used a serious mood as opposed to humorous.

Table 8: Rowan University: Tone

Technique	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Ad #1 - #21	x		
Poster #1 - #15	x		
Contest #1 - 2	x		
Event #1 - #3	x		

All of the techniques of Rowan University use a positive tone, as do the other two colleges.

Table 9: Rowan University: Approach

Technique	Indirect	Direct
Ads #1 - #21		x
Poster #1 - #15		x
Contest #1 - #2		x
Event #1 - #3	x	

Rowan University's ads, posters, and contests used a direct approach and the events used an indirect approach.

Table 10: Rowan University: Mood

Technique	Humorous	Serious
Ad #1 - #7	x	
Ad #8 - #21		x
Poster #1 - #13		x
Poster #14 - 15	x	
Contest #1 - #2		x
Event #1 - #3		x

The mood of Rowan University's techniques were predominantly serious, as is the case for the other two colleges.

The tone of the messages for all three colleges is positive. Ramapo and Rowan used a direct approach more often than indirect, while The College of New Jersey used an indirect approach more than direct. The mood for Ramapo is serious across the board while Rowan and The College of New Jersey predominantly used a serious mood as opposed to humorous. Codes used for intercoder reliability agreed with this researcher's results.

### Personal Interviews

This researcher conducted personal interviews with the Project Directors of The College of New Jersey (Joe Hadge), Ramapo College of New Jersey (Dr. Al Frech), and Rowan University (Pamela Negro). They each were asked the same questions regarding their Alcohol Social Norms Campaigns:

- How long have you been a Project Director of the Alcohol Social Norms Campaign?

- Do you hire Graduate Assistants or Student Workers to operate the campaign?
- Has your college's binge drinking rate decreased over the past couple years? If yes, do you believe your campaign is the reason?
- What PR technique do you think is most effective in the campaign (reaches the most people): posters, ads, contents or events? And why?
- Messages: do you use more direct/indirect, humorous/serious? Do your techniques accurately portray the typical student at your college?
- Can your campaign be improved? In what way?

Hypothesis #2 (use of the most effective PR/Advertising techniques will decrease binge drinking) was supported as evidence in the following research findings. Frech and Negro have been the Project Directors since the campaigns began, more than ten years ago. Hadge has been the Project Director since The College of New Jersey received its first grant for the project six years ago.

The College of New Jersey employs part-time Office Assistants, who are usually undergraduate students. Hadge and other staff have input in the campaign. As for the rates on binge drinking decreasing, problematic behavior has decreased at The College of New Jersey. Statistics show drinking amounts reduced over the last three years. Recent findings will show a notable decrease.

The College of New Jersey's most effective technique in reaching people overall is their posters. It produces high-quality posters and posts them in places with the most student traffic. Their ads and contests are not the most effective techniques. Creative messages, some direct and some humorous, are used. Hadge said these campaigns are logical and effective, but only one or two slices of the pie of prevention. As for improving the campaigns, The College of New Jersey thinks more time and better



computers would be beneficial. It also is a drawback when the Office Assistants (students) come and go, so that he has to start over with new students each time.

Ramapo employs undergraduate students (Peer Educators) to assist the professional staff with ad design and with contests and events. The rate at Ramapo has been stable without significant change. But by analyzing the statistics, there are fewer binge drinkers and students drink less. So there are more people at a low risk level although the binge drinking rate has remained stable.

Ramapo also claims their posters are the most effective way to reach the students. This gives them exposure all over the campus. Well-done, colorful posters get attention. They offer \$5.00 to students who have one of the posters displayed in their dorm rooms. Personal contact with students is a vital part of the campaign. They e-mail 200 freshmen who can win a prize if they reply back with a statistic. Besides their efforts, Ramapo is not reaching the 50% mark on students that have been exposed to 6 or more ads or posters.

Ramapo would like more personal discussion with students on believability so they can explain to them how they arrived at the statistics and find out why they do not believe it. Another question to be discussed is how the misperceptions came about. Refining e-mail pieces and conducting student focus groups for feedback would provide useful, important information.

Rowan University employs graduate assistants to operate the campaign by creating ads, posters, contests, and events. Negro feels students will be more comfortable participating with other students as opposed to administrators. The binge drinking rates

at Rowan University went down 25% in a three year period (Perkins 2003), but the rates went up at Rowan and all campuses after September 11.

The most effective technique at Rowan utilizes are interactive endeavors, such as the Rowan Radio (WGLS) contests and other contests. Posters and ads in the school newspaper get attention as well, but interactive events draw in students. Negro of Rowan concluded that an assistant to help and be interactive on the campaign would be very helpful. Another major factor to improve is graphic arts design. The campaign has a great need for people with quality graphic art skills.

The three colleges mainly use direct messages and they believe their ads and posters portray the typical student on their campus. They want to reach as many people as they can and spread the message. Their main resources are money and time to disseminate the campaign. They need to use the most effective techniques in order to have a successful campaign. They have used the most effective techniques for their campuses to reach the most students and to decrease the rate of binge drinking on campus.

### Focus Groups

This researcher conducted two focus groups, each comprised of eight Rowan University students of various backgrounds: ethnicity, grade level, athletes, and members of fraternities or sororities, those who live on campus or off campus. The participants were shown three ads, three posters, three contests, and three events from the Rowan University Alcohol Social Norms campaign. They were asked to comment on what they thought of each item and why they did or did not like them (see Appendix D). They also were asked if they believed the social norms messages and statistics noted on each item:

- Most Rowan Students Drink Moderately or Not At All
- Most Rowan Students Have 0, 1, 2, 3 Drinks at A Bar or Party

FOCUS PANEL #1

Table 11: Participant Demographics

	Gender	Grade	Ethnicity	Residence	Campus Involvement
Participant 1	Male	Senior	Caucasian	Off Campus	Athlete
Participant 2	Male	Junior	Caucasian	Off Campus	Athlete
Participant 3	Female	Junior	Caucasian	Off Campus	Athlete
Participant 4	Female	Junior	Hispanic	On Campus	Sorority / Latina Assoc.
Participant 5	Male	Sophomore	Caucasian	On Campus	
Participant 6	Female	Senior	Caucasian	Off Campus	Sorority / Athlete
Participant 7	Male	Senior	Caucasian	On Campus	Fraternity / Circle K
Participant 8	Female	Senior	Black/Asian	On Campus	Sorority

Table 11 reflects the demographics of the focus panel participants. This panel was comprised of Rowan University students of various grade levels, ethnicity, residence status, and campus involvement.

### Posters

All the participants have seen the basketball poster on campus and they do not believe the message. They see the facts on the poster, but not a message which they find effective. One participant said this poster is more appealing to athletes and that the information should be broken into percentages to be clearer. Other participants thought the message was unclear and maybe a famous athlete on the poster would draw attention to it. Another participant thought that posters of bars or parties draw more attention. Another participant said the poster should be more creative, such as a ball dunked in a beer. All of the participants do not believe the message or statistics, and some of them joke about the posters on campus.

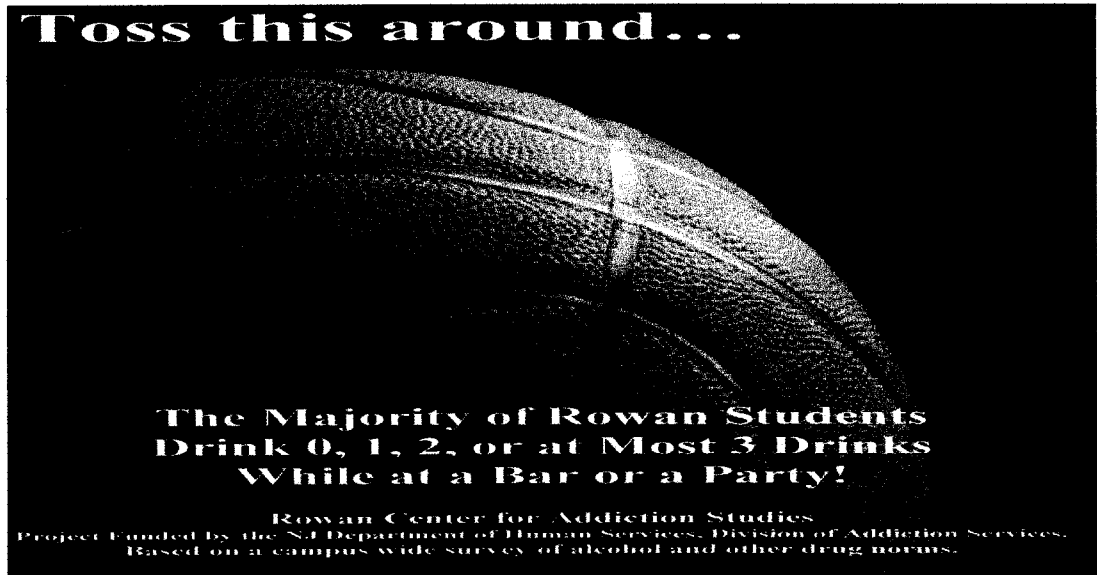


Figure 4.1: Rowan Basketball Poster

The elephant poster is an optical illusion. The participants felt this poster was interesting and provokes thought to figure out the message. But they also found this poster contradictory to other posters they have seen. They all said this is their favorite poster because the illusion draws attention and the message is related to viewers because they are seeing things that are not really there in the picture and text.

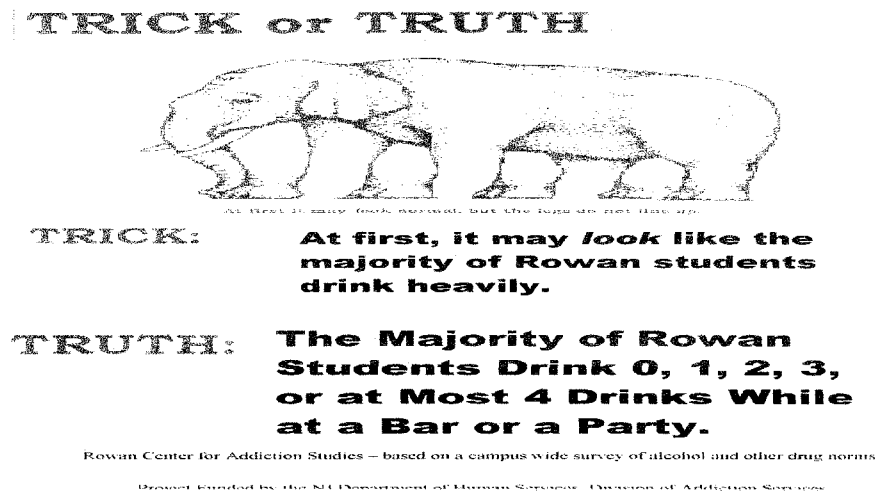


Figure 4.2: Rowan Elephant Poster

Participants found the Winter Scene poster catchy and they have seen it in the college newspaper, the *Whit*. They agreed that their disbelief of the message is based on their subgroups and not the overall student population at Rowan University.



Figure 4.3: Rowan Winter Scene Poster

## Ads

Participants said they have seen the “Trick or Truth” ad in the *Whit*. They felt it would be more effective and valid if it had percentages on it. They thought the optical illusion catches your eye and draws interest, as well as appeals to a large crowd.

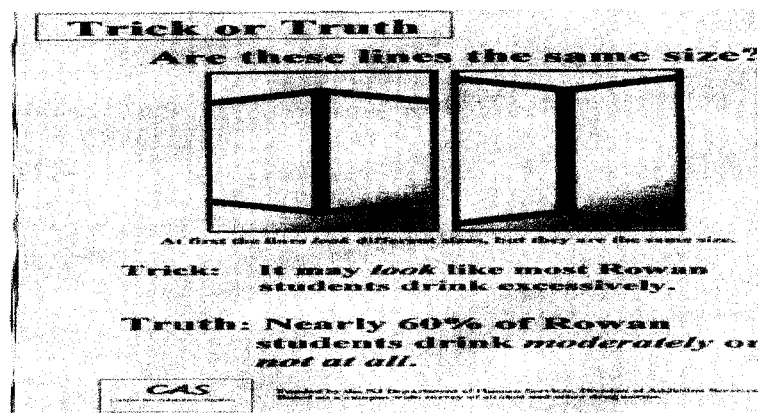


Figure 4.4: Rowan “Trick or Truth” Ad

The “Polls Are In” ad was featured in the *Whit* during the Presidential election in 2004. Participants liked the ad since it provided a different array of facts, but they think it would be more effective if information on how the statistics were gathered were included. They all agreed that ads depicting current events or holidays are more favorable.

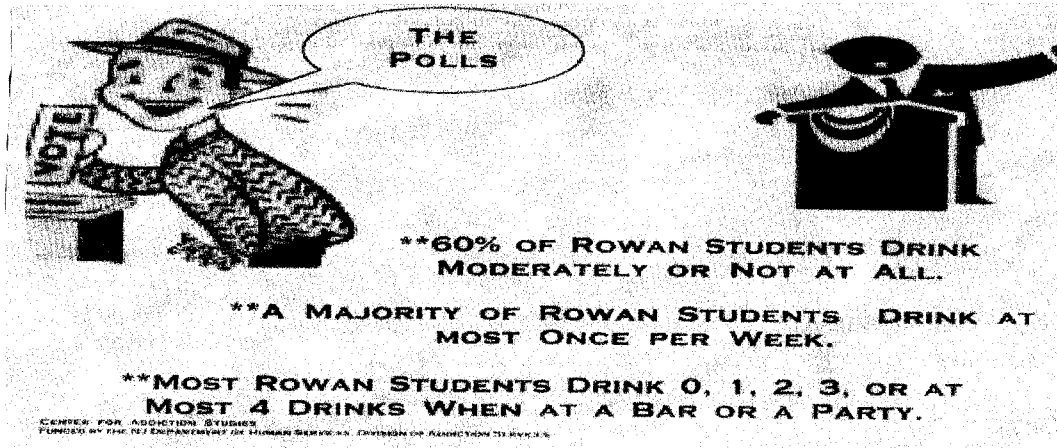


Figure 4.5: Rowan “The Polls Are In” Ad

Participants agreed the Mirror ad is catchy and appealing to the female population. But they also think it would be more believable if it included how the number decreases, what percent is decreased, and how the numbers have decreased over the years.

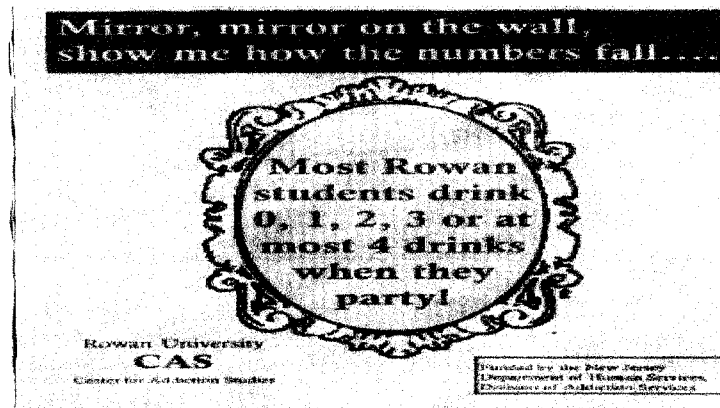
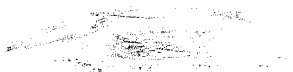


Figure 4.6: Rowan “Mirror” Ad

## Contests

The prize for the Christmas contest was a certificate for the mall. The participants agreed that money and certificate prizes are favorable. They believe that incentives draw interest. But they thought students may not retain the facts on the contest page they filled out. They think more interaction may help students to think about the information and retain it.

**ANSWER THE QUESTION CORRECTLY  
THEN YOU WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO  
GUESS THE NUMBER OF MINTS IN THE JAR**



**The winner will receive a \$100  
Gift Certificate to the Deptford Mall!**

Winner will be chosen on December 7<sup>th</sup> at 1:00!

Circle the 2 *CORRECT* answers:

Most Rowan Students.....

- A) HAVE MORE THAN 4 DRINKS WHEN THEY PARTY.
- B) HAVE 0-4 DRINKS WHEN THEY PARTY.
- C) DON'T DRINK AT ALL.
- D) DRINK ONCE A WEEK, IF AT ALL.

Number of Mints: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Rowan Center for Addiction Studies  
856-863-2175

Based on a campus wide survey of alcohol and other drug norms.

Funded by the NJ Department of Human Services, Division of Addiction Services

Figure 4.7: Rowan Christmas Contest

All of the participants found the Football Toss contest to be fun and effective because the questions provoked thought and there was interaction. They also liked the prizes. The radio contest required people to call the Rowan radio station with two statistics from the alcohol social norms campaign. The participants agreed the great

prizes, such as an IPOD, draw interest. They also said that active participation and researching to find the statistics will help students retain the information.

## **Rowan Football Toss**



**10/12/04**

**Object:**

Students were asked one of six questions; if the student answered correctly they were allotted one raffle ticket. In addition to the raffle ticket, they were given an opportunity to win three more raffle tickets, by throwing the football through one of the holes. For every toss that went through the hole they were allotted one raffle ticket. If the student answered the question incorrectly they were provided with the correct answer; thus, clearing up any misperceptions of alcohol use on campus and were encouraged to try again with another question.

**Giveaways:**

Raffle for ten \$10.00 gift certificates to Wawa.

**Number of Participants:**

125 Students

**Questions Asked:**

1. When at a bar or a party, Rowan students typically drink, if at all, which of the following:  

A: 4 Drinks	C: 8 Drinks
B: 5 Drinks	D: 10 Drinks
2. True or False: A majority of Rowan students consume 5 or more drinks in a row?
3. The majority of Rowan students drink alcohol how many days a week, if at all?  

A: 4 days a week	C: 1 day a week
B: 2 days a week	D: 7 days a week
4. True or False: Everyone at Rowan drinks.
5. True or False: According to a majority of Rowan students, it's okay to drink as long as it does not interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
6. Most Rowan students have how many drinks at a party?  

A: 0 drinks	E: 4 drinks
B: 1 drink	F: Any of the above
C: 2 drinks	G: None of the above
D: 3 drinks	

Figure 4.8: Rowan Football Toss

### Events

Participants like themes at events, such at the “Halloween Candy Event”. They found the candy wrapped with messages to be effective. Participants found the “10 Misperceptions Event” to have long instructions, which are not favorable. They also suggested that more outgoing staff and music will attract more people to an event.

The “Roll the Dice Event” was found to be fun by the participants since it was interactive and that useful prizes are favorable. Overall, the participants found the



following items to be useful, good prizes that also would promote the campaign: cash, gift certificates, pens, gym towels, umbrellas, t-shirts, water bottles, ice scrapers.

## Halloween Candy



10/26/04

**Object:**

Trick or Treat, students were offered pieces of candy in celebration of Halloween. An assortment of candy was offered to the campus and each piece of candy contained a message in regards to the alcohol norms on campus. The message on every piece of candy was the following, "Most Rowan students drink 0, 1, 2, 3, or at most 4 drinks when at a bar or a party."

**Giveaways:**

Candy

**Number of Participants:**

230 students

**Quote on Label:**

"Most Rowan students drink 0, 1, 2, 3, or at most 4 drinks when at a bar or a party."

Figure 4.9: Rowan "Halloween Candy Event"

## Top 10 Misperceptions

10/19/04

**Object:**

Students were handed a flyer with the top 10 misperceptions at Rowan University. Within the top 10 misperceptions were 3 misperceptions about alcohol use on campus. At the bottom of the handout, students were then provided with the accurate data in regards to alcohol use on campus. For reading the flyer students were allowed to take a giveaway.

**Giveaways:**

Magnets and Yo-yo's

**Number of Participants:**

98 students

**Top 10 Misperceptions:**

1. There are ALWAYS empty parking spots on campus.
2. A fire alarm will NEVER wake you up in the middle of the night.
3. **Everyone at Rowan drinks!**
4. NOBODY waits till the last minute to write papers.
5. The Rowan Network NEVER crashes.
6. On-Campus construction has YET to become an inconvenience.
7. **Rowan students drink to get drunk.**
8. EVERY classroom has a clock.
9. The computer labs AREN'T full during finals week.
10. **Rowan students drink every night of the week.**
  - 60% of Rowan Students drink moderately if at all.
  - And Rowan Students drink one time a week.
  - When Rowan Students go to a bar or a party, they drink 1, 2, 3, or 4 drinks if any at all.

Figure 4.10: Rowan "Top 10 Misperceptions Event"

## Roll the Dice

9/28/04

### Object:

Students were asked to roll the dice. The number rolled signified the question asked. If the student answered the question correctly then they would receive a give-away of their choice. If they answered incorrectly, they were provided with the correct answer to clarify and correct any misperceptions and were encouraged to roll again.

### Giveaways:

Magnets, Yo-Yo's and Silly Putty

### Number of Participants:

65 Students

### Questions Asked:

1. When at a bar or party, Rowan students typically drink, if at all, which of the following:  
A: 4 drinks                      C: 8 drinks  
B: 5 drinks                      D: 10 drinks
2. True or False: A majority of Rowan students consume 5 or more drinks in a row?
3. The majority of Rowan students drink alcohol how many days a week, if at all?  
A: 4 days a week                  C: 1 day a week  
B: 2 days a week                  D: 7 days a week
4. True or False: Everyone at Rowan drinks.
5. True or False: According to a majority of Rowan students, it's okay to drink as long it doesn't interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
6. Most Rowan students have how many drinks at a party?  
A: 0 drinks                      E: 4 drinks  
B: 1 drink                        F: any of the above  
C: 2 drinks                      G: none of the above  
D: 3 drinks

Figure 4.11: Rowan "Roll the Dice Event"

### Focus Panel 1 Conclusion

The participants of Focus Panel #1 find the campaign messages not believable. They feel the messages inform but do not impact students. They agreed that posters need to reflect situations that draw attention, such as bars or parties. They think contests are a good idea but outgoing people are needed to get students involved. They said contests should be more interactive, perhaps held outside using the Student Center patio for outdoor activities or movie night. They like theme events with free food and activities

that provoke thought. They agreed that ads need to back up information with statistics and the use of percentages. They also agreed that interactive activities such as the fatal vision goggles and car simulations are enjoyable and informative.

All the participants agreed that contests reach more people mainly because of the prizes and giveaway and the questions asked are retainable and memorable. They feel interaction makes people think. They felt ads are not as effective and they suggested using e-mail, the campus portal, and the WebCT to advertise contests and events.

FOCUS PANEL #2

Table 12: Participant Demographics:

	Gender	Grade	Ethnicity	Residence	Campus Involvement
Participant 1	Female	Senior	Caucasian	Off Campus	Athlete
Participant 2	Male	Senior	Caucasian	Off Campus	Fraternity
Participant 3	Female	Junior	Pacific Island	Off Campus	Athlete
Participant 4	Female	Senior	Caucasian	Off Campus	
Participant 5	Female	Senior	Caucasian	On Campus	
Participant 6	Female	Senior	Caucasian	Off Campus	Athlete
Participant 7	Male	Senior	Caucasian	On Campus	
Participant 8	Male	Senior	Caucasian	Off Campus	Athlete

Table 12 reflects the demographics of the participants of focus panel #2. This panel was comprised of Rowan University students of various grade levels, ethnicity, residence status, and campus involvement.

**Posters**

The participants agreed that the message on the basketball poster is not believable. They found this poster boring even though the basketball may draw some attention but that it would reach more people if it was more professional and direct.

As for the elephant poster, the participants missed the association between the elephant illusion and the message. They want easily readable posters they do not require much time to read or figure out. They suggested it should read “Students don’t drink more than 4...”.

The participants found the Winter Scene poster to have a good tagline and good layout, but they do not like or believe the message. They admit that their belief/disbelief of the message is based on their subgroups and not the overall student population at Rowan University. They realized the factor of commuter students may effect their belief or disbelief of statistics. One participant suggested that the poster should indicate the source of information. Another participant said the falling snow on the poster could represent accumulating numbers, although the message states the numbers are falling.

## Ads

Participants agreed that they would spend more time looking at the optical illusion on the Trick or Truth ad. They agreed the message would be more believable if it had percentages, using the percent sign. They also agreed “moderation” should be defined in the messages.

The participants did not believe the message in the Polls ad. They think a better layout with less text would improve the ad. One participant claimed the “polls” showed what people think, not fact. As for the Mirror ad, the participants do not believe the message. One participant suggested the survey which gathers statistical information should target on campus vs. off campus students. Another participant felt he would forget about this ad and it does not grab attention. The participants said this ad is not catchy and does not appeal to females.

## Contests

The participants agreed that cash and certificate prizes are favorable. They said certificates to supermarkets, convenience stores, or the mall are always good prizes. They agree that incentives draw interest and attention. But they disliked this contest because it was not informative since students guessed the answers and leave without being given the correct answers. They also felt this required too much work to select correct answers and guess the number of mints in a jar.

The participants liked the prizes for the Football Toss contest, but they felt the raffle ticket aspect was too involved and participation should be easy. The participants liked the radio contest and agreed that good prizes create interest.

## Events

As for the Halloween Candy event, the participants agreed that free candy is a great idea. They agreed that the 10 Misperceptions event required too much reading of long instructions which is not favorable or effective. They did like the concept of the Roll the Dice event and agreed that useful prizes such as cash, towels, umbrellas, and t-shirts are more favorable. They suggest a more appealing table to display contests may draw in more students.

## Focus Panel 2 Conclusion

The participants of focus panel #2 do not find the messages believable and they do not portray the “typical” Rowan student. They would like to see more information about the survey that was used and a link to sites for more statistical information. They agreed that the messages inform but do not impact. They feel free food and outdoor activities, movie nights, and concerts would draw in more students. They feel ads need to

be backed up with information on the surveys and the statistics. Participants said they would attend events such as the “Mocktail” or “Lalanobooza”.

The participants suggested using different taglines and providing more information and details. They also like the concept of testimonials to focus on students and how much they really do drink (a more-like-you approach to non-drinkers). They suggested the ads and posters need to be more colorful and grab attention. They think professionals should create direct or humorous publications and a “call to action” should be displayed for student involvement. They think the Rowan water bottle label should have the message “Most Rowan Students Drink Moderately” in the large print and “Rowan” in the small print. They also said giveaways need to have more information, such as a website address to find out more information, instead of a one line message. They agreed that messages would be believable if information on how the statistics were calculated was available.

The participants agreed that ads are the most effective way to reach people, since they see the ads but not much advertising for contests or events. They agreed that using undergraduate PR and Advertising students who use Quark to create posters and ads is a great idea. They suggested the use of e-mail, the campus portal, and WebCT to advertise events. They believe interactive contests and good prizes reach more people. They suggesting using messages that list alternative activities more appealing than drinking, such as movie nights, outdoor concerts, game shows, and sporting events.

## Conclusion

The participants in both focus groups voiced their opinions on what draws attention and attracts the most students. They conveyed which techniques are not

effective in spreading the messages as well as which techniques effectively reach more students to see, believe, and retain the messages.

Both hypotheses were supported by the research. Certain techniques used at colleges will reach the most students and result in decreases of binge drinking. Certain techniques are more effective for students to notice, believe, and retain information. Other techniques are not effective. By using the most effective techniques, the binge drinking rate will decrease, and so will the problems that can arise from binge drinking.

## Chapter 5

### Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine if certain PR/advertising techniques applied to Alcohol Social Norms Campaigns will most effectively reach the greatest number of college students. It also was to determine if the use of the most effective techniques would decrease binge drinking rates at the three colleges. This research shows that certain techniques most effectively reach the most students. Posters and interactive activities draw in students, whether to win prizes or get attention. The most effective techniques were used at the colleges and rates of binge drinking, problematic behavior because of drinking, or the amount of drinking decreased.

### Conclusion

This research found that certain techniques work more effectively than others. Some techniques work better at one college than at another. Therefore, each college needs to know what works best on its campus to reach the most students. Research, such as student focus groups, can be helpful to determine what works best. Feedback from students will reveal which techniques get their attention, motivate them to find out more, and attract them to participate. Finding out how to present the statistics to students so they will understand them and believe them is vital for the campaign's effectiveness. If only one technique worked effectively at all colleges, future project directors would have



an easy job. But in reality, different techniques must be used at each campus to reach the students. Feedback from the students is a key factor to find out what they pay attention to and what they believe is the message. Occasional focus groups of students will be valuable in evaluating the campaign's effectiveness. In general, interactive techniques such as contests and events are appealing to students, as well as creative posters.

## Recommendation

The PR practitioners involved with these campaigns must be educated on research and disseminating the information. They need to change the messages and posters often to stay fresh and new. Students will tend to ignore the same poster over time. Practitioners need to use their resources efficiently, such as time and money. They also need to hire people with graphic art skills and outgoing personalities to draw in students. Messages should always be positive and clear.

## Recommendations for Further Research

This was a narrow study involving only three colleges in New Jersey. A larger sample, such as all the New Jersey colleges running Alcohol Social Norms campaigns or colleges all over the United States with these campaigns would provide more information on effective PR techniques. This study also may have been skewed in that focus groups were conducted only with Rowan University students. A longitudinal study would be interesting and informative. This researcher suggests using the same poster at all three colleges to measure its effectiveness. By expanding on the techniques, perhaps the perfect design will emerge from the efforts. When defining effective, consider the following: Do they see the messages? Do they believe the messages? Will they remember the messages?

## Evaluation

This researcher set out to determine if certain PR/advertising techniques work more effectively in an Alcohol Social Norms Campaign and if using these techniques decrease the binge drinking rates at The College of New Jersey, Ramapo College of New Jersey, and Rowan University. This researcher found that certain PR/advertising techniques are more effective in reaching the most students and that using the most effective techniques will decrease the binge drinking rates.

## References

- Baer, John S. (1994). Effects of college residents on perceived norms for alcohol consumption: an examination of the first year in college. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 8, 43 – 50.
- Haines, M.P. (1996). *A social norms approach to preventing binge drinking at colleges and universities*. Newton, MA: The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention.
- Jeffrey, L. (2000). Decreasing binge drinking in new jersey colleges and universities by correcting student misperceptions of college drinking norms. A Publication of the New Jersey Higher Education Consortium, State of New Jersey Alcoholic Beverage Control.
- Jeffrey, L., Negro, P., Miller, D., & Frisone, J. (2003) The rowan university social norms project. In H.W. Perkins (Ed.), *The Social Norms Approach to Preventing School and College Age Substance Abuse*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- LaMastro, Valerie, Ph.D. (2004) *An overview of best practices in the prevention of underage drinking*. A Publication of the New Jersey Higher Education Consortium, State of New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control.
- Merrill, Sarah. (2003). Study: diversity of students lowers college binge drinking rates. *Alcohol and Drug Abuse Weekly*, 43, 3 – 4.
- Meyer, Philip. (2002). Is the college binge drinking problem overstated? *USA Today*, April 3, 2002.
- Moore, E. H. (2003). A field manual for developing pr events and activities that work. A Publication of the New Jersey Higher Education Consortium, State of New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control.
- National Social Norms Resource Center. Social norms is effective: wechsler study flawed. Retrieved on March 17, 2005 at: [www.socialnorm.org](http://www.socialnorm.org).
- Perkins, H.W. (2003). *The social norms approach to preventing school and college age substance abuse: a handbook for educators, counselors, and clinicians*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Perkins, H.W. & Berkowitz, A.D. (1986). Perceiving the community norms of alcohol use among students: some research implications for campus alcohol education programming. *International Journal of the Addictions*, 21, 961-976.
- Rubington, E. (1990). Drinking in the dorms: a study of the etiquette of RA-Resident Relations. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 20, 451 – 461.
- Schemo, Diana Jean. (2002). College binge drinking results in death and sexual assaults. *Contemporary Sexuality*, Vol.36, #5
- Schroeder, C.M. & Prentice, D.A. (1998). Exposing pluralistic ignorance to reduce alcohol use among students. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 28, 2150 – 2180.
- Sher, K.J., Bartholow, B.D., & Nanda, S. (2001). Short and long-term effects of fraternity and sorority membership on heavy drinking: a social norms perspective. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 15, 42 – 51.
- Toomey, T.L., Jones-Webb, R.J., & Wagenaar, A.C. (1993). Policy – alcohol. *Annual Review of Addictions Research and Treatment*, 3, 279 – 292.
- Wechsler, Henry, Ph.D.(2001). Trends in college binge drinking during a period of increased prevention efforts. *Journal of American College Health*, Vol. 50, #5.
- Wechsler, H., Nelson, T.F., Lee, J.E., Seibring, M., Lewis, C. & Keeling, R.P. (2003) Perception and reality: a national evaluation of social norms marketing interventions to reduce college students heavy alcohol use. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 484-494.
- Werner, M.J., & Greene, J.W. (1992). Problem drinking among college freshmen. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 13, 487 – 492.

## Appendixes

Appendix A. Core Institute Survey

Appendix B. Personal Interview questions

Appendix C. Focus panel recruitment fliers

Appendix D. Focus panel questions

## Appendix A

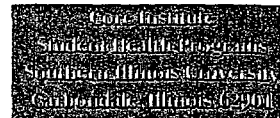
### Core Institute Campus Survey of Alcohol and Other Drug Norms

# Campus Survey of Alcohol and Other Drug Norms

## Marking Instructions

- Incorrect Marks ☒ ☓ ☐ ☑  
Correct Marks ●
- Use a No. 2 pencil only.
  - Make solid marks that fill the oval completely.

This is a survey of students' alcohol and other drug attitudes and usage. We want you to tell us about yourself and your perceptions of other students. Do not put your name on this form—this is an anonymous survey. Questions that ask about other students are referring to students at this institution.



The first set of questions asks about how frequently alcohol and other drugs are used by students at this school.

1. How often do you think students in each of the following categories typically consume alcohol (including beer, wine, wine coolers, liquor, and mixed drinks)? Just give your best estimate for each category. (Fill in the oval corresponding to the best answer for each category of students.)

	Never	1-2 times/year	6 times/year	Once/month	Twice/month	Once/week	3 times/week	5 times/week	Every day
a. Yourself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Your friends	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Students in general	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Males	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Females	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. On campus students	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
g. Off campus students	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
h. Fraternity members	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
i. Sorority members	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
j. Intercollegiate athletes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

2. How often do you think students in each of the following categories typically use marijuana? Again, just give your best estimate for each category. (Fill in the oval corresponding to the best answer for each category of students.)

	Never	1-2 times/year	6 times/year	Once/month	Twice/month	Once/week	3 times/week	5 times/week	Every day
a. Yourself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Your friends	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Students in general	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Males	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Females	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. On campus students	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
g. Off campus students	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
h. Fraternity members	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
i. Sorority members	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
j. Intercollegiate athletes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

3. How often do you think students in each of the following categories typically use any illicit drug other than marijuana? Again, just give your best estimate for each category. (Fill in the oval corresponding to the best answer for each category of students.)

	Never	1-2 times/year	6 times/year	Once/month	Twice/month	Once/week	3 times/week	5 times/week	Every day
a. Yourself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Your friends	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Students in general	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Males	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Females	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. On campus students	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
g. Off campus students	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
h. Fraternity members	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
i. Sorority members	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
j. Intercollegiate athletes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

The next set of questions asks about the quantity of alcohol consumed.

4. Overall, what percentage of students here do you think consume no alcoholic beverages at all? Just give your best estimate. (Fill in the boxes and mark the corresponding ovals.)

			%
○	○		
①	○		
②	○		
③	○		
④	○		
⑤	○		
⑥	○		
⑦	○		
⑧	○		
⑨	○		

5. Overall, what percentage of students here do you think consumed five or more drinks in a row on at least one occasion in the last two weeks? Again, just give your best estimate. (Fill in the boxes and mark the corresponding ovals.)

			%
○	○		
①	○		
②	○		
③	○		
④	○		
⑤	○		
⑥	○		
⑦	○		
⑧	○		
⑨	○		

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA



322282

6. Think back over the last two weeks. How many times have you had 5 or more drinks in a row? (Fill in the oval corresponding to the best answer.)

- 0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15+

7. How many alcoholic drinks, on average, do you think each of the following students typically consumes at parties and bars? (A drink is a bottle of beer, a glass of wine, a wine cooler, a shot glass of liquor, or a mixed drink.) (Fill in the oval corresponding to your best estimate of the average number of drinks consumed by each category of students on one of these occasions.)

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15+
a. Yourself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Your friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Students in general	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Males	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Females	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. On campus students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Off campus students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Fraternity members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. Sorority members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. Intercollegiate athletes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. If you never drink, fill in this oval  and skip the rest of this item. Otherwise, please answer the following questions. Think about your last social drinking occasion with other students.

- a. How many drinks did you consume on that occasion?  
 0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15+
- b. How many drinks did the other students consume, on average?  
 0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15+
- c. Looking back, how many drinks would you have preferred to drink?  
 More  The same  Less
- d. Again looking back, how many drinks do you think the other students would have preferred to drink, on average?  
 More  The same  Less

9. On any given occasion, how many alcoholic drinks are most typically consumed by you and by others in each of the following places? Just give your best estimate. (If you never attend the activity or it is not available, mark that response and leave both estimates blank.)

	Not Available	Never Attend	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15+
a. Bar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yourself			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Others			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Athletic events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yourself			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Others			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Fraternity social functions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yourself			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Others			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Sorority social functions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yourself			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Others			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Residence hall informal get-togethers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yourself			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Others			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. School dances (or "mixers")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yourself			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Others			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Off-campus parties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yourself			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Others			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



10. Which statement below about drinking alcoholic beverages do you feel best represents your own attitude?

(Fill in the oval corresponding to the best answer for you.)

- a. Drinking is never a good thing to do.
- b. Drinking is all right but a person should not get drunk.
- c. Occasionally getting drunk is okay as long as it doesn't interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
- d. Occasionally getting drunk is okay even if it does interfere with academics or responsibilities.
- e. Frequently getting drunk is okay if that's what the individual wants to do.

11. Which statement below about drinking alcoholic beverages do you feel best represents the most common attitude among students in general here? (Fill in the oval corresponding to the best answer.)

- a. Drinking is never a good thing to do.
- b. Drinking is all right but a person should not get drunk.
- c. Occasionally getting drunk is okay as long as it doesn't interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
- d. Occasionally getting drunk is okay even if it does interfere with academics or responsibilities.
- e. Frequently getting drunk is okay if that's what the individual wants to do.

12. Which statement below about using marijuana do you feel best represents your own attitude?

(Fill in the oval corresponding to the best answer for you.)

- a. It is never a good thing to use.
- b. Trying it out one or two times is okay as long as it doesn't interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
- c. Occasional use is okay as long as it doesn't interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
- d. Occasional use is okay even if it does interfere with academics or responsibilities.
- e. Frequent use is okay if that's what the individual wants to do.

13. Which statement below about using marijuana do you feel best represents the most common attitude among students in general here? (Fill in the oval corresponding to the best answer.)

- a. It is never a good thing to use.
- b. Trying it out one or two times is okay as long as it doesn't interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
- c. Occasional use is okay as long as it doesn't interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
- d. Occasional use is okay even if it does interfere with academics or responsibilities.
- e. Frequent use is okay if that's what the individual wants to do.

14. Which statement below about using any illicit drug other than marijuana do you feel best represents your own attitude? (Fill in the oval corresponding to the best answer for you.)

- a. Use is never okay.
- b. Trying out a drug once or twice is okay as long as it doesn't interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
- c. Occasional use is okay as long as it doesn't interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
- d. Occasional use is okay even if it does interfere with academics or responsibilities.
- e. Frequent use is okay if that's what the individual wants to do.

15. Which statement below about using any illicit drug other than marijuana do you feel best represents the most common attitude among students in general here? (Fill in the oval corresponding to the best answer.)

- a. Use is never okay.
- b. Trying out a drug once or twice is okay as long as it doesn't interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
- c. Occasional use is okay as long as it doesn't interfere with academics or other responsibilities.
- d. Occasional use is okay even if it does interfere with academics or responsibilities.
- e. Frequent use is okay if that's what the individual wants to do.

16. Consider those campus rules and regulations regarding alcohol and other drug use that you are aware of on this campus. Fill in the oval next to the response that comes the closest to or best represents your position.
- I generally know of and support these rules and regulations.
  - I generally know of and oppose these rules.
  - I generally know of these rules but have no opinion.
  - I am not really aware of these rules.

17. Again, considering campus rules and regulations regarding alcohol and other drug use, what percent of the student body do you believe:

(Just give your best estimate for each question even if you are unsure. Your estimates or best guesses on A through D should total to 100%. Fill in all boxes and mark the corresponding ovals, even if they are zeroes.)

- a. ... generally knows of and supports these rules and regulations?      b. ... generally knows of and opposes these rules and regulations?      c. ... generally knows of these rules but has no opinion?      d. ... are not aware of these rules?

%    +      %    +      %    +      %    = 100%

▼

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

▼

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

▼

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

▼

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

18. Classification:
- Freshman
  - Sophomore
  - Junior
  - Senior
  - Grad/professional
  - Not seeking a degree
  - Other

19. Age:  
(Fill in the boxes and mark the corresponding ovals.)
- |   |   |
|---|---|
|   |   |
| 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 2 |
| 3 | 3 |
| 4 | 4 |
| 5 | 5 |
| 6 | 6 |
| 7 | 7 |
| 8 | 8 |
| 9 | 9 |

20. Ethnic Origin:
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
  - Hispanic
  - Asian/Pacific Islander
  - White (non-Hispanic)
  - Black (non-Hispanic)
  - Other

21. Living Arrangements: (Mark best answer.)
- House/apartment/etc.
  - Residence Hall
  - Approved housing
  - Fraternity or sorority housing
  - Other

22. Gender:
- Male
  - Female

23. Is your current status as a student:
- On-campus
  - Off-campus

24. Extracurricular activities: (Mark all that apply.)
- Fraternity/Sorority member
  - Fraternity/Sorority pledge
  - Intercollegiate athlete

25. Approximate cumulative grade point average: (Choose one.)
- A     B     C     D     F

26. Student status:
- Full-time (12+ credits)
  - Part-time (1-11 credits)

For Additional Use:

27.         28.         29.         30.         31.

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA



322282

Please answer the five questions below to complete the survey. DO NOT mark your answers on this sheet. Mark your responses to these items on the bottom of page 4 of the survey (additional questions 27 – 31):

27. How often have you performed poorly on a test or assignment or missed a class due to your drinking during this academic year?
- I do not drink
  - Never experienced this due to drinking this year
  - Once
  - Twice
  - Three or more times
28. How often have you damaged property due to your drinking during this academic year?
- I do not drink
  - Never experienced this due to drinking this year
  - Once
  - Twice
  - Three or more times
29. How often have you injured yourself or someone else due to your drinking during this academic year?
- I do not drink
  - Never experienced this due to drinking this year
  - Once
  - Twice
  - Three or more times
30. Do you recall seeing or hearing any information on your campus about students and alcohol use? If so, what was the main or most common message you recall? If not, mark "e" for your response.
- It is illegal for students under 21 to drink.
  - For most students at this school, if they consume alcohol, they drink moderately.
  - Drinking is a health risk.
  - Other message about alcohol use.
  - I do not recall any information.
31. How often, if ever, during this academic year have you seen or heard any information or messages about what the majority of students think and do regarding alcohol use based on survey data from your school?
- Never
  - Once
  - Two or three times
  - Four or five times
  - Six or more times

Appendix B  
Personal Interview Questions

## **Personal Interviews**

Project Directors for Rowan University, The College of New Jersey, and Ramapo College of New Jersey

How long have you been a Project Director of the Alcohol Social Norms Campaign?

Do you hire Graduate Assistants or Student Workers to operate the campaign?

Has your college's binge drinking rate decreased over the past couple years? If yes, do you believe your campaign is the reason?

What PR technique do you think is most effective in the campaign (reaches the most people): posters, ads, contents or events? And why?

Messages: do you use more direct/indirect, humorous/serious? Do your techniques accurately portray the typical student at your college?

Can your campaign be improved? In what way?

## Appendix C

### Focus Panel Recruitment Fliers

**Attention ROWAN STUDENTS  
I NEED YOU!  
Please participate in my Focus Group  
Free Pizza and Soda!  
Date: Thursday, March 3  
Time: 12:30 to 1:30pm  
Place: Bosshart Hall**

**PLEASE CONTACT ME TO SIGN UP:  
Christine DiBlasi, LAS Institute/CAS  
856-256-4525 or [dibiasi@rowan.edu](mailto:dibiasi@rowan.edu)**

**Thank you!**

**ATTN: ROWAN STUDENTS**

**I NEED YOU!!!**

**Please participate in my fun focus group:**

Date: Wednesday, March 30, 2005

Time: 5pm to 6pm

Place: Bosshart Hall-room 232

**FREE FOOD!**

**PLEASE CONTACT ME TO SIGN UP:**

Christine DiBlasi

LAS/CAS

Rowan University

[diblasia@rowan.edu](mailto:diblasia@rowan.edu) or 863-2175

Thank you!



Appendix D  
Focus Panel Questions

## Focus Groups

The focus group sessions will be tape recorded as well as notes taken.

The groups will be shown posters, ads, contests/events from the alcohol social norms campaign at Rowan. They will be asked the following:

What does this poster say to you?

What is the message?

Does this portray the typical Rowan student?

Which poster/ad do you like best and why?

Does this contest appeal to you? Does the prize appeal to you?

What types of contests and prizes would get your attention?

What should we do?

What would work? (Types of posters, ads, contests, events, prizes)

