



Drug and Alcohol:

The Impact on International Student Emotional Wellness

Presenters



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Agenda



- Current Climate
- Mental Health Stressors
- Immigration & Visa Regulations
- Communication with Students
- Departments & Stakeholders
- Insurance Explored
- Resources
- Discussion and Q&A



Current Climate

34% of college respondents struggled with anxiety disorder and 41% with depression according to the 2021 [Healthy Minds Study](#)



Mental Health Crisis

73% of students reported moderate or serious psychological distress according to the [Fall 2021 American College Health Association National College Health Assessment](#) survey.



Impact of COVID

- The efforts made to help minimize the spread of COVID left many students with uncertainty and concern about their health, mental health, and academic futures.
- Post-secondary students were disproportionately affected by the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A survey of more than 16,800 students in 21 countries found that more than half of undergraduates said their mental health had suffered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. ([Chegg, 2021](#))



International Students Hit Even Harder

“International students across the globe have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic due to additional sources of uncertainty,” – Cory Owen, EdD, associate dean of students at Yale-NUS College and the author of *Advising International Students with Disabilities*.

“You have the response of any young person living through the pandemic—and doing it in another country far away from their support networks.” — Emma Swift, EdM, associate director of the Office of International Education at the University of Vermont and the author of *U.S. Classroom Culture*.

“Isolation, especially for first-year graduate and professional students living off campus, who are far away from families and yet to form their own community locally.” – Ling Jin, MA, student development coordinator at Duke University’s International House.

Drug & Alcohol Trends Among College Students



Drug and alcohol use on the rise across the United States

- 53% of full-time college students ages 18-22 drank alcohol in the last month and about 33% engaged in binge drinking in that same period [NIAAA](#).
- Alcohol consumption increases by 39% between February 2020 to November 2020 across the United States
- NIDA study that analyzes substance use indicates marijuana usage is up amongst college students
- Trends are showing that students are drinking more frequently but in lower quantities per occasion ([Dumas et al., 2020](#); [Graupensperger, Fleming, et al., 2020](#))



Mental Health and Substance Abuse

International Student Stressors

- Academic challenges
- Anxiety and depression
- Financial stress
- Homesickness
- Immigration regulation
- Internet challenges
- Isolation
- Time Differences
- Unstable living conditions

-
- Substance abuse can occur more frequently with certain mental health problems:
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Schizophrenia
 - Personality Disorders
 - In some cases:
 - Form of self-medicating
 - Mental and substance abuse disorders share some underlying causes

Identifying Signs

Behavioral

Establish a baseline to identify the signs.



- Drop in attendance and performance at work or school
- Frequently getting into trouble
- Using substances in physically hazardous situations (ex: driving)
- Engaging in secretive or suspicious behaviors
- Changes in appetite or sleep patterns
- Unexplained change in personality or attitude
- Sudden mood swings, irritability, or angry outbursts
- Periods of unusual hyperactivity, agitation, or giddiness
- Lacking motivation
- Appearing fearful, anxious, or paranoid, with no reason

Identifying Signs

Physical



Establish a baseline to identify the signs.

- Bloodshot eyes and abnormally sized pupils
- Sudden weight loss or weight gain
- Deterioration of physical appearance
- Unusual smells on breath, body, or clothing
- Tremors, slurred speech, or impaired coordination

Identifying Signs

Social



Establish a baseline to identify the signs.

- Sudden change in friends, favorite hangouts, and hobbies
- Legal problems related to substance use
- Unexplained need for money or financial problems
- Using substances even though it causes problems in relationships

Abuse, Dependence and Addiction



- Alcohol Abuse: “A pattern of drinking that results in harm to one’s health interpersonal relationships, or ability to work.” – Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Drug Abuse: Any illicit use. Street drug use in general and prescription medications without a prescription.
- Dependence: When a user develops a physical tolerance to a substance over time and experiences withdrawal symptoms. Typically dependence is resolved when slowly tapering off the use.
- Addiction: When extensive use has caused the user’s brain chemistry to change. Uncontrollable cravings to use drugs (even when harm to self or others is/has been done). Treatment is necessary.

Overcoming the Stigma

- Dispel the myths
- Know the facts about cultural differences around counseling
- Invite on-campus counselors/psychologists to orientation and meet & greet opportunities
- Educate counselors/psychologists on how to communicate across cultures
- Give testimonials even anonymously, and perhaps in their native language
- Normalize students' concerns and stress
- Creative ways of introducing counseling

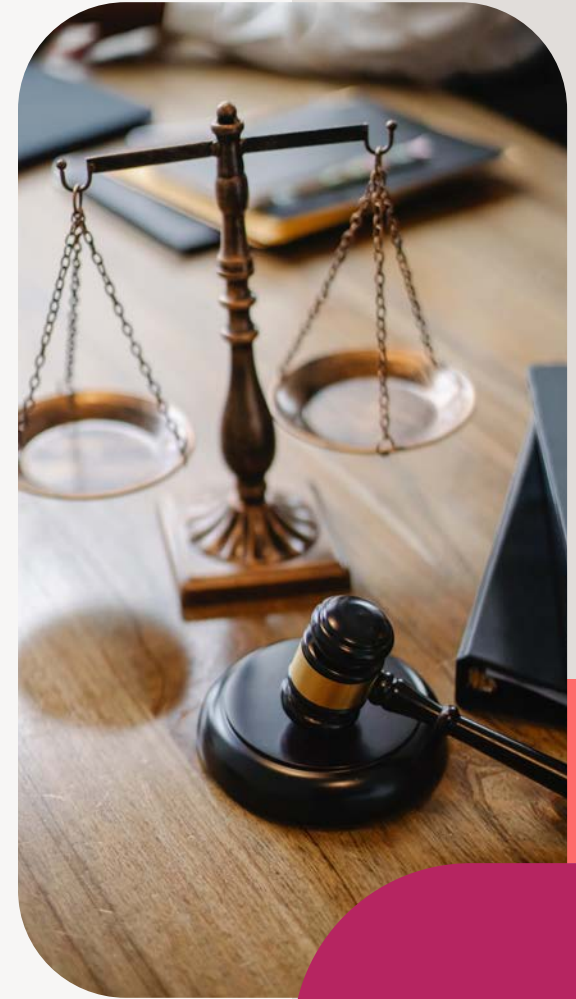


Resources on Campus: Connecting with Counseling



- Develop a connection with the center
 - Know basic information and share it with students.
 - Hours, processes, insurance/payment, scheduling appointments
- Familiarize yourself with their experience working with culturally diverse individuals
 - List specific contacts to refer students to if applicable
 - Based on language and cultural experience
- Establish programing
 - Early in the year and throughout
- Highlight Counseling Center events through newsletters, social media, etc.

Immigration & Visa Regulations



Immigration Concerns



- State Law vs. Federal Law
 - Unlike peers, federal law supersedes state law for international students
 - E.G., Marijuana remains illegal under federal law, so students cannot take partake
- Variation in Penalties/Charges under State Law
 - Violations of drug/alcohol laws categorized differently by state for DUI, underage drinking, providing alcohol to a minor
 - E.G. Giving alcohol to a minor is a 4th degree felony in New Mexico, underage drinking is a misdemeanor

Immigration Concerns



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

Consequences of Conviction

- Charges for any crime involving “Crime Involving Moral Turpitude” (CIMT) can make a student inadmissible or deportable:
- Deportable after
 - 2+ convictions total or
 - 1 conviction within 5 years of last admission in the offense carries a potential sentence of 1 year
 - Even if only a misdemeanor
- Inadmissible or Barred based on lack of “Good Moral Character” (GMC) <https://www.uscis.gov/policy-manual/volume-12-part-f-chapter-5>
- Bars exist for the following drug/alcohol offenses: Controlled Substance Violation (including Marijuana), habitual drunkard, 2 or more convictions for DUI, and others

Immigration Concerns



Consequences of Conviction

- Any arrest for CIMT-type charge, even if later dismissed, is presumed to result in visa revocation (even though student may not receive notification)
- Student may not have to leave the US, but when they do the visa is no longer valid for reentry
- Student may not find out until they try to return
- When they do apply for a new visa, they must first report to a physician (approved by the embassy) who must attest that they do not have a drug or alcohol problem
- Any admission on the part of the student to consumption could result in visa denial and not being able to return to resume studies

Other Concerns for International Students



Life consequences can be even greater

- Financial
 - Fines
 - Lawyer Fees
 - Diminished job opportunities due to conviction
- Criminal Record
 - Can affect qualification for housing, jobs, future program admission
- Academic
 - May be unable to complete program resulting in additional financial and life hardship



everything
is
connected

Communicating with International Students

New International Students



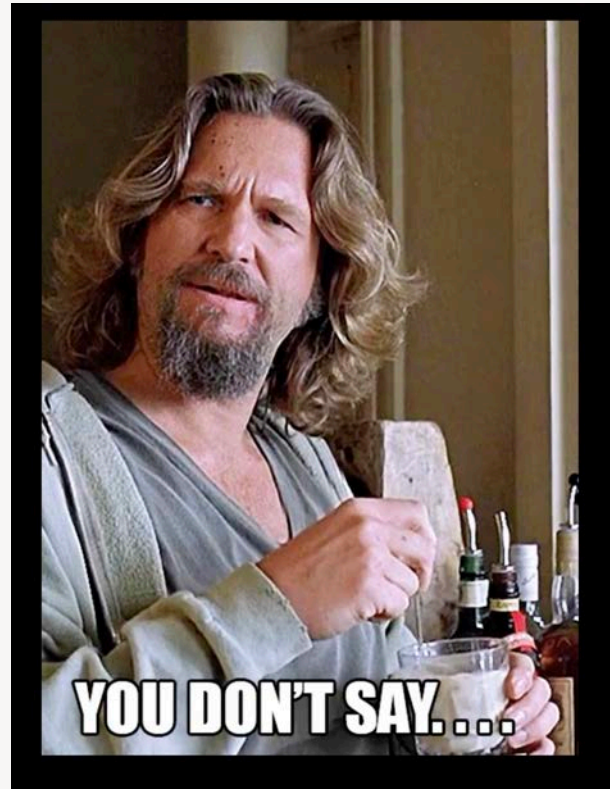
- Make sure they know about physical and mental health resources on campus to help them with substance abuse problems
- Understand common issues in your state/at your institution and address these directly with new students at orientation
- Help them get the message by using humor

Mentimeter/quiz questions:

- What is the drinking age in the US? Answers: 18, 21, 20, 30
- If your American friend convinces you to buy a gun for your birthday you? Answers: Get a simple handgun, Ask for the special international discount at the gun store, Buy your American friend's gun (it's easier), None of the above
- If marijuana is legal in a state, am I allowed to participate? Answers: Yes, No, Only edibles

New International Students

- Memes & Gifs



New International Students



- Have to be 21 to drink in the US
- An ID is required to get into bars and at restaurants if ordering alcohol
- IT IS A FELONY (SERIOUS CRIME TO GIVE ALCOHOL TO ANYONE UNDER 21!!!)
- ABQ Policy “Party Patrol” often raids parties in the area near campus; if you are hosting a party with alcohol, make sure guests are over 21!

New International Students

Figure out what is being offered at other orientations



UNM New Student Orientation

- ***What's in Your Cup?*** Orientation program discusses:
 - Blood Alcohol Content and perfect amount for being tipsy
 - Risky drinking
 - Reducing risk and understanding science to increase fun
 - Real statistical information about what your peers are doing (which is often less consumption than you think)

Current International Students



- Offer Workshops/Informational Programs and Social/Cultural Programming
 - Invite Counseling Center and Others
 - Talk explicitly about issues
 - Programs to connect & establish support network
- Keep track of problem areas
 - ABQ Party Patrol
 - DUI Checkpoints
- Remind students at regular intervals
 - Regular semester messages
 - Before travel (if seeking visa)
- Ask students to come to your for problems/referral
 - Refer to criminal and immigration attorneys for problems
- Partner with others on campus who are dealing with these issues for all students at your institution
 - Get on your University's CARE team for early intervention with internationals
 - Work with other units

Explore Campus Services



UNM COSAP Office

Work with students, faculty, and staff on harm reduction, Research, Coordinate and develop substance abuse prevention programs for all members of the campus community, ensure UNM's compliance with federal regulations related to substance abuse issues.

Student Programs:

Fun in the 505: Alcohol-free alternative activities

Lobo Safe Ride: Uber card giveaway, and other ride-share options for DWI prevention

Lobo Rx: Safe Medicine Practices

Lobos Party Smart: Educational media campaign

Lobos Stay with the Pack: Social norm media campaign (uses real data to show that most students are not drinking as much as perceived to reduce binge drinking)

Know Your Campus: UNM Example

Alcohol Use Past 30 Days

- 2021 38%
- 2020 31%
- 2019 37%
- 2018 45%
- 2017 39%
- 2016 32% of UNM students did not drink alcohol in the past 30 days
- **National College Average: 40%***

○

Binge Drinking Past 2 Weeks

- 2021 21%
- 2020 18%
- 2019 26%
- 2018 26%
- 2017 31%
- 2016 35% of UNM students engaged in binge drinking at least once in the previous 2 weeks
- **National College Average: 30%***

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*Patrick, M. E., Schulenberg, J. E., Miech, R. A., Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., & Bachman, J. G. (2022). Monitoring the Future Panel Study annual report: National data on substance use among adults ages 19 to 60, 1976-2021.

Know Your Campus: UNM Example

Use of Marijuana

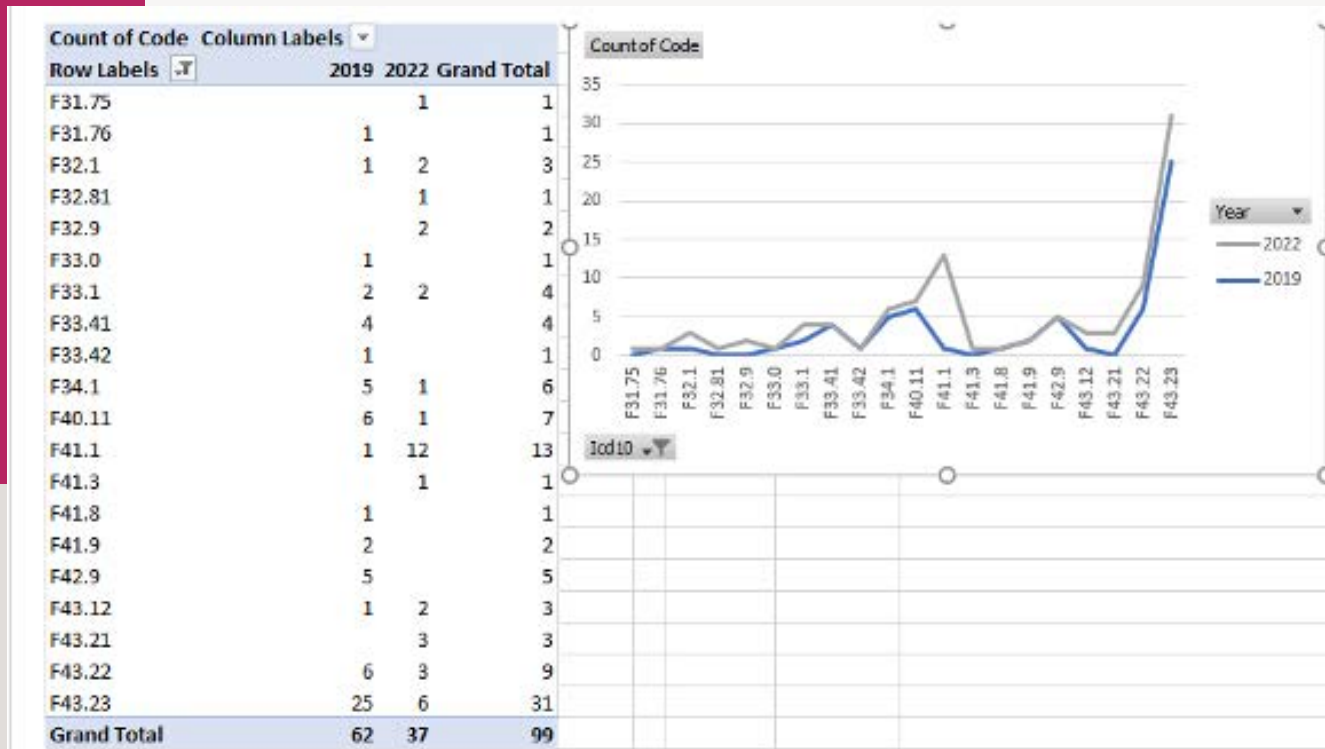
- 2021 44%
- 2020 32%
- 2019 36%
- 2018 28%
- 2017 33%
- 2016 34% of UNM students used marijuana at least once during the previous year
- **National College Average: 40%***

Prescription Drugs w/o prescription (30 days)

- 2021 2.1%
- 2020 8.1%
- 2019 2.3%
- 2018 3.5% of UNM students used a prescription drug not prescribed to them during the past 30 days
- 2016-17**
- **National College Average: *****

*Patrick, M. E., Schulenberg, J. E., Miech, R. A., Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., & Bachman, J. G. (2022). Monitoring the Future Panel Study annual report: National data on substance use among adults ages 19 to 60, 1976-2021.

If Possible, Get Stats for Your Students



UNM International Students: Mental Health Diagnoses 2019 vs. 2022

Diagnostic Codes (may be co-morbid, multiple diagnoses rather than unique clients):

- F31 Bi-Polar Disorders
- F32 –33 Depressive Disorders
- F40 –42 Anxiety Disorders
- F43 Stress/Adjustment Disorders
- F44 Dissociative Disorders



Departments & Stakeholder Support

Institutional Partnerships

- Counseling Center
- Public Safety
- Welcome Event



- Email reminders
- Student Life
- MultiCultural Center



University Counseling Center

- Individual counseling
- Group counseling
- Mindfulness Center
 - Feel better now workshop practices
 - Relaxation & mindfulness exercises
- Crises Services

Center for Student Wellness



- Workshop & training offerings
- Wellness Coaching
- THEM Ambassador Program
- Peer Health Education

Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)



- Dean of Support Initiative
- Support Services
 - Emergency Resources
 - Community Resources
 - University Resources
 - Recognizing & Helping Students in Crisis



Insurance Explored & Resources

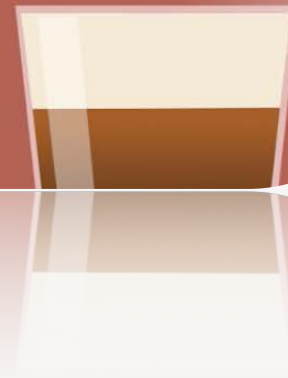
Insurance Considerations

- Health insurance should cover mental health
 - Verify coverage (i.e., internal limits, day maximum, etc.)
 - Includes coverage for substance abuse
 - Injuries/illnesses as a result of intoxication/drug abuse
 - Suicide/attempted suicide
 - Provider network
- Telecounseling
 - Increasing in popularity
 - Ask if telecounseling is part of your telemedicine program
 - A range of programs available through insurance plans or independently
 - Some have additional resources/screening surveys



Drug & Alcohol Video

What International Students
Need to Know About
Drugs & Alcohol



[https://
www.internationalstudentinsur
ance.com/explained/drugs-
and-alcohol-video.php](https://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/explained/drugs-and-alcohol-video.php)

Training Program

Sexual Assault & Mental Health Training Programs

 **INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT
INSURANCE**

Administrators ▾ Students Parents/Guardians Resource Center ▾

Emotional & Mental Health Training Program

 **Powerpoint Presentation**
Professionally designed presentation to walk your students through the training.

 **Video Content**
Two videos on mental health awareness and student perceptions on culture shock and stress from around the world.

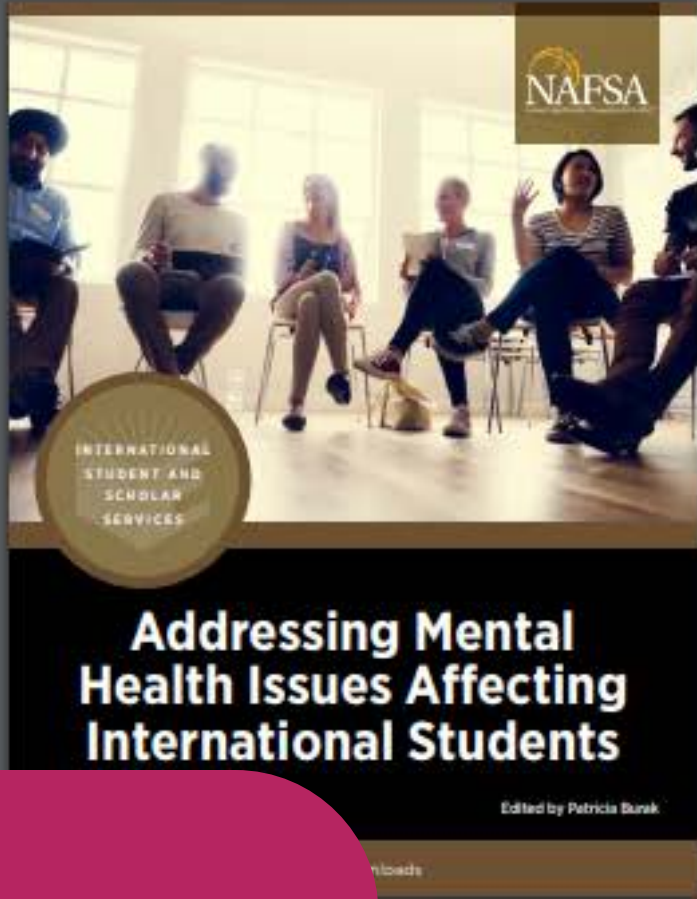
 **Student Handout**
A downloadable student guide take-away, or we can supply hard copies, to distribute to students.

 **Interactive Activities**

 **Proctor Guide**

In partnership with

- MGH Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness
- RAINN
- International Student Insurance



Resources

- Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness (MGH CCCSEW)
- NAFSA Booklet: Crisis Management in a Cross Cultural Setting: ISSS
- NAFSA Booklet: Addressing Mental Health Issues Affecting International Students

Services & Hotlines

Hotlines

- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
 - 988
 - 988lifeline.org
- The National Domestic Violence Hotline
 - 1-800-799-SAFE
 - <http://www.thehotline.org>
- It Gets Better Project (LGBTQ)
 - 1-866-4-U-TREVOR
 - www.itgetsbetter.org/pages/get-help

Services

- Crisis Text Line
 - <http://www.crisistextline.org/>
 - Text 741-741



Discussion Q&A





Thank You