

[subject line]November 2011 Fulfilling Federal Mandates

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November 2011

Did you know?

- 34% of students in a study at a large university said they had used a prescription stimulant medication during a time of academic pressure to increase reading comprehension, cognition, or memory.¹
- 29.5 % of college students in another national study had missed a class because of alcohol use and almost 22% reported having fallen behind in their work in the past year as a result of drinking.²
- Binging and frequent drinking in college are associated with leaving college without a degree and earning less in post-college employment.³

[subhead]Fulfilling Federal mandates

Your school must meet mandates intended to prevent alcohol and drug abuse, violence, exploitation, and discrimination to remain eligible for Federal education funds. “Dear Partner” and “Dear Colleague” letters carry the force of law and may upend the interpretation of existing requirements. And it’s a truism that no matter how effective your program is, efforts that aren’t documented won’t help maintain your certification. In this issue, we look at two recent communications from Federal regulators, and how MyStudentBody can help schools respond.

[subhead]Drug prevention and the biennial review

On September 23, the US Department of Education (DOE) joined forces with the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) in a [“Dear Partner” letter](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/ondcp_higher_ed_letter.pdf) [link to: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/ondcp_higher_ed_letter.pdf]]to college and university administrators announcing that under the *2011 National Drug Control Strategy*, campus drug abuse prevention programs would fall under increased scrutiny.^{4,5}

Schools have been required to provide prevention programs under Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) Part 86 (the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Act) since 1990. But on many campuses, alcohol is the main concern. The September letter emphasized drug abuse prevention and treatment in a new way, calling for systematic early identification and treatment of students with substance abuse disorders and increased partnership with college-level recovery programs.⁴

The letter also explicitly pointed out the requirement to cover drug abuse programs and sanctions in the upcoming Part 86 biennial review. As you assemble your report over the next year, keep in mind that

DOE is looking for evidence that your program actively addresses illegal drug use. If drug prevention hasn't been an emphasis on your campus in recent years, now is the time to make sure your program goals and strategies include it.

- Both laws and medical knowledge change, sometimes rapidly. Make sure the drug messages in your annual notification are up to date.
- President Obama has set a goal of reducing illegal drug use in the US by 10% over the next 5 years.⁵ Consider a similar goal for your campus.
- If you survey your students or staff as part of your biennial review process, be sure to include questions on both drug and alcohol use and treatment.
- The review requires you to recommend revisions, so if you find your program falls short in its approach to drugs, investigate ways to better reflect the DOE/ONDCP goals in the future.

Also make the most of any tools and data you currently use that do address drug use. The drugs section in MyStudentBody Essentials provides prevention education on both prescription and illicit drug abuse, and MyStudentBody Admin reports data that can help you assess the prevalence and severity of drug abuse on your campus.

Helping students deal with drugs on MyStudentBloggy

Overheard On Campus: Sometimes people offer me drugs at parties. I feel uncomfortable just saying no. How should I respond?

[link: <http://blog.mystudentbody.com/2011/05/11/overheard-on-campus-sometimes-people-offer-me-drugs-at-parties-i-feel-uncomfortable-just-saying-no-how-should-i-respond/>]

Overheard On Campus: I found out my best friend is using cocaine. What can I do to stop her?

[link: <http://blog.mystudentbody.com/2011/03/30/overheard-on-campus-i-found-out-my-best-friend-is-using-cocaine-what-can-i-do-to-stop-her/>]

Using prescription drugs to get an edge in college?

[link: <http://blog.mystudentbody.com/2010/05/13/study-drug-use-and-abuse-at-college/>]

[subhead]Dominican College uses MyStudentBody in Title IX compliance

Dominican College, in Orangeburg, NY, is a small college in the Catholic tradition serving about 1,800 students with professional programs in teacher education, athletic training, social work, business administration, and the health care professions of nursing and occupational and physical therapy. In addition to over 30 programs of study, the college also has a strong athletic program, sponsoring 12 intercollegiate sports in NCAA Division II.

According to Dominican College's Prevention and Education Coordinator, Eileen A. Piccininni, MA, LPC, CASAC, CEAP, the "Dear Colleague" letter issued by the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights last April means all US colleges will be looking more uniformly at how they handle sexual assault complaints.⁶ The letter, which the White House has declared a "significant guidance document"⁷, reiterated schools' obligation under Title IX to deal with sexual harassment as unlawful discrimination, and detailed the process by which institutions should respond to sexual assault complaints.

"The 'Dear Colleague' letter specifically references issues around sexual violence," Piccininni says. "Every campus will be reviewing and improving methods for promoting healthy and safe environments through educating students about sexual violence issues."

Dominican has used MyStudentBody for the past five years as part of its alcohol abuse prevention education, and began using the Essentials course, which covers sexual violence as well as alcohol and drug use, last year. Piccininni finds it an effective tool for Title IX training and documentation. "Proactively, we've assigned MyStudentBody Essentials as part of the curriculum for our year-long Freshman Seminar," she says. "I also use it when I have students who violate the alcohol and other drug policy."

As part of an educational sanction for students who violate the policy, Piccininni requires completion of either the Essentials Course or the Student Conduct Course. Piccininni has also assigned the sexual violence component of Essentials course to students whose relationships show warning signs of dating violence or potential abuse. "These courses help to increase the culture of respect for self and respect for others, instilling the importance of being an active bystander and of a shared responsibility for the safest and most healthy learning environment possible," she explains.

And at Dominican, MyStudentBody isn't just for students. "Every administrator in student services has been asked by our Dean of Students to take and pass the Essentials course," Piccininni says. "We've recommended that faculty and other staff take it as well."

[subhead]**With gratitude: Thanksgiving thoughts from MyStudentBody**

A note from Amy Cavender, MyStudentBody Customer Implementation Specialist

As we move towards the end of the year, I hope that you have the moment to slow down, take a breath, and think about all of the good things you have accomplished this year in the service of others. It's easy to forget sometimes in the day-to-day details, but I think that everyone reading this is in a position to have a powerful and positive impact on others.

My background is in counseling and student affairs. One important concept I learned in that field is *servant-leadership*. It's the idea that that even though you have authority over a group of people, your actions should be guided by concern for their well-being and development.

I truly enjoy working with you, our MyStudentBody administrators, because you consistently focus on what is best for your students. Health and wellness are important to the overall picture of student success, and providing information and guidance about them is a valuable service. We at

MyStudentBody are, of course, grateful that you've chosen our program to help meet those needs. We appreciate you and look forward to working with you in the future.

Best wishes for Thanksgiving and the end of the term! If you have any questions about how to use any of the reports or custom settings on MyStudentBody, please don't hesitate to get in touch. I'm at 512/968-1777, or you can email me at acavender@mystudentbody.com.

[mailto:acavender@mystudentbody.com]

[subhead]**References**

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