

MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY POLICY

Policy #:	03-0029				
Name of Policy:	Substance Abuse Policy				
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Policy Owner	Dean of Students/Title IX Coordinator				
Policy/Chapter Sections					
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1.0 PURPOSE

Pursuant to the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989, and to provide resources and support to its students, the University has established a drug and alcohol prevention program for its students.

2.0 SCOPE

This Policy applies to all University students.

3.0 POLICY

Students are prohibited from using alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs on University-owned or controlled property and at University-sponsored or supervised activities. Irresponsible alcohol or other drug usage off campus resulting in disorderly conduct on campus is also prohibited. Any student of the University found to have manufactured, dispensed, possessed or used a controlled substance in violation of the Substance Abuse Policy of this University will be subject to discipline in accordance with University policy and reported to local, state or federal law enforcement authorities for criminal prosecution. Criminal prosecution for these acts could lead to conviction and such a conviction could result in a sentence imposing a monetary fine, imprisonment in a state or federal penitentiary or both.

Health Risks: Specific serious health risks are associated with the use of illicit drugs and alcohol. Some of the major risks are as follows:

Alcohol and other depressants (barbiturates, sedatives, and tranquilizers): Addiction, accidents as a result of impaired ability and judgment, overdose when used with other depressants, damage to a developing fetus, heart and liver damage.

Marijuana: Addiction; panic reaction; impaired short-term memory; increased risk of lung cancer and emphysema, particularly in cigarette smokers; impairment of driving ability.

Cocaine: Addiction, heart attack, seizures, lung damage, severe depression, paranoia, psychosis. Similar risks are associated with other stimulants, such as speed and uppers.

Hallucinogens (acid, LSD, PCP, MDMA, etc.): Loss of consciousness, suffocation, damage to brain and central nervous system, sudden death, nausea and vomiting, nosebleeds, impaired judgment.

Resources: Varieties of resources exist for drug or alcohol counseling, treatment or rehabilitation programs.

For additional details about these resources, or to explore other support options available through the University or local community, students are encouraged to contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@mssu.edu or 417-625-9559, or reach out to the Dean of Students Office at deanofstudents@mssu.edu or 417-625-3032.

We're here to help you navigate challenges and connect with the care you need. Such referrals will respect individual confidentiality. A main objective of the University's Drug and Alcohol Prevention Program is to encourage healthy attitudes and behaviors on the part of all students and responsible decisions about alcohol/drug use. A final objective is to provide students with the necessary skills to help them carry out the decisions they have made in regard to their use or nonuse of alcohol/drugs, and how to effectively handle certain "high pressure" situations.

To meet the above objectives, information and assistance is provided to students in several ways. First, alcohol and drug films are shown and programs conducted in all orientation classes, which are required for all new students. Additional alcohol and drug information is presented in other academic classes, including Kinesiology and Lifetime Wellness. Pamphlets about alcohol and drug use are distributed each semester in residence hall rooms and in the Student Life Center. Special alcohol and drug training is provided annually for residence hall staff and orientation leaders. The athletic department provides additional programming for varsity athletes. Special alcohol and drug programs are presented throughout the year. Active drug testing is done. A committee of counselors, teachers and clergy are available to assist varsity athletes. The Dean of Students office provides alcohol and drug information throughout the year for all students.

Medical Amnesty: The health, safety, and welfare of the MSSU community is a primary concern of University officials, even if students are in violation of University alcohol/drug policies. Students should not hesitate to seek medical attention for themselves or others when the health and/or safety of someone is at risk. Students can do this without fear of facing disciplinary action from the University. Student violators may, however, be required to participate in a University alcohol and drug education program. This Medical Amnesty is implemented at the discretion of the Director of Student Conduct (or designee) and applies only to emergencies.

Violations of these prohibitions will be handled in the following manner:

1. For students, serious drug violations will usually result in being arrested by University Police officers and having charges filed through the Jasper County Prosecutor's Office. Other options include receiving disciplinary prohibition, suspension or expulsion as provided in the Student Handbook.

2. For employees, violations could result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Violations will usually also involve the involvement of the UPD and filing of charges through the Jasper County Prosecutor's Office.

Below are some of the legal sanctions an individual could face for illegally using alcohol or drugs:

1. Missouri law prohibits the purchase or possession of alcohol by those under 21 years of age. It also prohibits persons from knowingly furnishing alcohol to those under 21 years of age. These offenses are punishable by a fine ranging from \$50 to \$1,000 and up to one year imprisonment.
2. Under Missouri law, it is also illegal to drive while intoxicated, which means that you have a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher or it is determined that your driving ability is impaired (even if your BAC is below .08). A first offense can result in a \$500 fine and up to 6 months imprisonment. The potential fines and times of imprisonment increase when there are multiple offenses.
3. Missouri law also prohibits the unlawful use, possession, and distribution of controlled substances, including marijuana. Depending on the types and amounts of controlled substances involved and prior drug-related convictions, penalties range from a \$500 fine to life imprisonment. 62
4. Under federal law, illegal possession of a controlled substance can result in a fine of at least \$1,000 and up to one year imprisonment for a first offense. Penalties increase when an offender has been convicted of prior drug-related offenses. Illegal possession of a controlled substance can also result in the forfeiture of property, civil fines, and the loss of federal benefits. Trafficking controlled substances can also lead to substantial fines and lengthy prison sentences, including life in prison.
5. Conviction of a federal drug law can also result in ineligibility for federal financial aid. Missouri Southern State University is committed to increasing employee and student awareness of the dangers of substance abuse.

For example, marijuana can impair thinking, reading, comprehension and verbal skills; hallucinogens result in loss of control of normal thought processes; phencyclidine can produce violent and bizarre behavior; stimulants (amphetamines) may produce mood swings, panic and cardiac disturbances; cocaine is toxic, and overdoses result in death; narcotics cause dependency and severe symptoms upon withdrawal; inhalants have a high risk of sudden death; and alcohol can dull sensation and impair coordination, memory and judgment.

In an effort to maintain a drug- and alcohol-free environment, the University will provide:

1. Awareness programs through our University Wellness Program,
2. Enforcement and awareness programs through the University Police Department,
3. Assistance through the Willcoxon Health Center,
4. Assistance through the University physician,
5. Individual counseling through Counseling Services, and
6. Assistance with making referrals to outside agencies.

Everyone employed by Missouri Southern State University as a condition of employment will:

1. Abide by the terms of the University Substance Abuse Policy,

2. Notify the University of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction.

Missouri Southern will notify the proper agency of any convictions reported to them within ten days of the receipt of said notice. Any employee or student of Missouri Southern State University who violates the University's Substance Abuse Policy will be subject to discipline in accordance with this policy and reported to the University Police Department for criminal prosecution. Criminal prosecution for these acts could lead to a conviction, and such conviction could result in a sentence imposing a monetary fine, imprisonment in a state or federal penitentiary, or both.

Safe Harbor

MSSU offers a Safe Harbor rule for students seeking help with drug use or addiction. Students who disclose their own use, addiction, or dependency to MSSU officials and seek assistance will not face conduct complaints, provided this disclosure is made voluntarily and not in response to impending drug tests or conduct sanctions. A written action plan may be developed to monitor progress. Failure to comply with the action plan will nullify Safe Harbor protection and conduct processes may be initiated.

This policy is distributed annually to all students and employees in compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1998 (P.L. 101-690) and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (P.L. 101-226).

4.0 HISTORY

This policy may be revised, edited, changed or removed at any time with or without notice to applicable individuals.

January 2024 – Minor Revisions

August 2025 – Minor Revisions

5.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

None