



**Drug Free Schools Community Act**  
**2021 Biennial Review**  
**12/31/2021**

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## **I. Introduction:**

The following report is a result of the 2021 Drug Free Schools Communities Act (DFSCA) biennial review which evaluates the Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) programs implemented during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years. This report contains a description of the Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) community; an overview of the SCSU policies, sanctions, and enforcement efforts; a summary of AOD education and prevention programs; an assessment of program goals; a review of the strengths and weaknesses of SCSU AOD initiatives; and recommendations for the next two academic years. To conduct a thorough review, Residence Life, Counseling Services, the Office of Student Conduct and Civic Responsibility, the Wellbeing Center and University Police all participated in gathering information and assessing program effectiveness of AOD initiatives. Questions concerning alcohol and other drug programs, interventions and policies may be directed to Sarah Keiser, M.S. LADC, Coordinator of Alcohol and Drug Services at [keisers3@southernct.edu](mailto:keisers3@southernct.edu) and (203)392-5087.

## **II. About Southern Connecticut State University:**

Southern Connecticut State University is a diverse community of 8,788 students and is located less than three miles from downtown New Haven, Connecticut near the artsy and historic Westville Village section of the city. Founded as a teachers' college in 1893, Southern has evolved over the past century into a comprehensive university offering 114 graduate and undergraduate programs. More than four hundred faculty members lead students through a wide range of studies and research specialties. Students are housed in nine residence halls with an approximate occupancy of 2600 student spaces. Southern is an access institution, with a strong commitment to social justice, and is accredited by the Connecticut Board of Governors for Higher Education and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

## **III. Alcohol and Other Drug Policies:**

### **A. SCSU Student Alcohol and Other Drug Policy, University Sanctions, and Enforcement**

It is the University's intent to provide a drug free, healthy, safe, and secure academic environment. The University seeks to uphold the drug and alcohol-related policies and laws and will impose disciplinary sanctions against students who violate policies and laws consistent with local, state, and federal laws. The University prohibits the use, consumption, possession, and distribution of alcohol by any student under the age of 21 within university housing facilities, on campus grounds or at university sponsored events. The abuse of alcohol and other drugs by students, regardless of age and of location (on-campus or off-campus), is prohibited by the Student Conduct Code. The University can, and will, impose disciplinary sanctions for violations. Students are also subject to city ordinances and state and federal laws.

Recreational marijuana became legal in Connecticut on July 1, 2021, which makes the use and possession of lesser amounts of recreational marijuana legal for adults twenty-one and older. State and local municipalities will have to determine how to implement the law in their communities over the next few years but the use of marijuana is still prohibited on campus grounds regardless of age.

### **Good Samaritan Medical Amnesty Statement:**

In an effort to foster responsible student behavior and to respect the health and welfare of all members of the SCSU community, if an individual or organization reaches out to a campus official seeking medical attention for him/herself or for another, the student or organization requesting assistance and the student requiring assistance may not be subject to the typical disciplinary sanctions for a violation of campus alcohol and drug policies, as long as the individuals or organizations comply with all assessments and follow-up required by the Office of the Dean of Students.

This Good Samaritan Medical Amnesty Statement applies only to cases where there is a legitimate concern for a person's wellbeing because of excessive alcohol or drug use. Additional infractions occurring simultaneous to the alcohol or drug use (i.e., acts of vandalism, physical assault, disorderly conduct) will be adjudicated separately. If the student engages in any subsequent or repeat incidents involving misuse of alcohol and other drugs, the situation will be evaluated by the Dean of Students Office to determine if the Good Samaritan Medical Amnesty Statement applies. Further, this statement applies only to campus disciplinary procedures and does not apply to local, state, and federal processes.

### **Residence Hall Alcohol Policies and Protocols:**

Alcohol is not permitted in six of the nine residence halls and is permitted in limited quantities for students 21 years or older in Brownell, Schwartz, North Campus, and North Campus townhouses.

Residence Life staff are required to notify University Police of all incidents involving possession of alcohol by an underage student or providing alcohol to minors. Residence Life staff reserve the right to have a student dispose of alcohol in instances where alcohol is involved in a University protocol violation or a situation in which an individual's safety may be impacted.

University Police have the discretion to issue a citation for violations of the Connecticut State Law for possession of alcohol by a minor which may include a fine of \$136, suspension of a driver's license and criminal charges. Students found in violation of the alcohol protocol may receive a referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Civic Responsibility and to the Coordinator of Alcohol and Drug Services. Students with two or more violations of the alcohol protocol are at risk for losing on campus housing privileges.

Residence Life staff also reserve the right to request a medical evaluation for students appearing intoxicated. University Police and emergency personnel may transport a student to the hospital if medical attention is deemed necessary for the health and safety of a student. Notification is made to an emergency contact person provided by the student and is required for all medical transports to the hospital.

Residential students who have been transported to the hospital for a medical evaluation resulting from alcohol or drug intoxication are able to return to the residence halls upon discharge from the hospital. Students receive a "Returning to SCSU medical transport" form with instructions prior to their departure to the hospital. The Director of the residence hall will conduct a follow up wellness check the next day. Guests of residential students who violate the university's alcohol policy may be banned from entering the halls in the future.

## Sanctions and Enforcement:

There are several offices that serve a direct role in the enforcement of SCSU's alcohol and other drug policy as well as the issuing of sanctions. The primary offices consist of University Police, Residential Life, and Student Conduct/Civic Responsibility. Residential Life is responsible for lower-level incidents involving alcohol that take place in one of the residential facilities. These incidents are typically managed by the Resident Hall Director and involve first offenses and lower-level cases. University Police assists Residential Life when necessary, in the residential facilities but is primarily responsible for all other areas on campus.

The University Police have the discretion to handle through the legal system (i.e., violations, misdemeanor, etc.), refer to Student Conduct, or both. Student Conduct manages all cases referred from Residential Life and University Police. These are typically higher-level cases or repeat offenders and include all drug violations in the residence halls. The table below summarizes the incidents involving alcohol and other drugs handles within each of the office.

Alcohol	2019-2020	2020-2021
Student Conduct/Res Life	63	69
Non-resident cases	0	0
University Police Violations/arrests	94	0
Totals	157	69

Other Drugs	2019-2020	2020-2021
Student Conduct Cases	28	11
Non-resident cases	0	0
University Police violations/arrests	91	5
Totals	119	16

Each area has access to several types of sanctions to help change student behavior. As an educational institution, our primary focus is always one that is developmental in nature. In addition, we utilize progressive discipline as a means of changing behavior. University Police has the option to issue citations. These citations include a \$136 fine, a 30-day suspension of driver's license, and/or criminal charges. As Residential Life is overseeing lower-level cases, their sanctions will often include a referral to an educational program and community service. Depending on the level of case and the previous discipline record of the person involved, the outcome can result in a separation from the University or from residence halls. If the case does not meet that level, the Office of Student Conduct and Civic Responsibility will routinely refer students to the Coordinator of Alcohol and Drug Services for evaluation and completion of an educational program. Secondary sanctions may also include community service, educational programs, or other discretionary sanctions. Students who are assessed as being high risk with substance use and need more intensive treatment services for a substance use disorder may meet with the Coordinator of Alcohol and Drug Services who can refer a student to a treatment provider or program within the community.

Upon review, there has been a significant decrease in drug incidences in the residence halls between spring 2020 and fall 2021, as indicated by the decline in the number of student conduct referrals from residence life staff. Over the review period, the University continued to experience a significant decrease in overall enrollment, as well as a decrease in the number of students living on campus. In spring of 2020, 2,239 residents lived in the residence halls as compared to 1,178 in the spring of 2021 which shows a 47.39% decrease in occupancy. While this may be a direct result that COVID-19 had on the campus beginning in March 2020, it will be important to monitor whether these trends persist moving forward.

Alcohol and Other Drug Standards for Student-Athletes:

SCSU student athletes are subject to the same standards of all SCSU students. In addition, student athletes, including athletic training students, are required to participate in an education program which aims to educate students on the risks associated with the use of alcohol and performance enhancing drugs. The Coordinator of Alcohol and Drug Services provides information about resources, treatment, and recovery support services on campus through presentations to each of the athletic teams at the beginning of each academic year. The NCAA requires random drug testing with student-athletes throughout the year, including summer and post-seasons.

B. Employee Alcohol and Other Drug Policy, University Sanctions, and Enforcement:

The drug and alcohol-free workplace policy applies to any person who is representing or conducting business for the University. Any individual observed unlawfully manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, using, or possessing alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace is to be reported immediately to University Police or local law enforcement. The University strongly encourages faculty and staff members to voluntarily obtain assistance for an alcohol or drug problem before such behavior results in an arrest and/or disciplinary referral which might result in their separation from the institution.

Individuals seeking help for a substance abuse problem are provided with resources on treatment programs in the community. The Lexington Group, an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) will maintain the confidentiality of persons seeking treatment and will not report them to institutional or state authorities. Through the Office of Human Resources, The Lexington Group offers employees additional education and counseling, as well as appropriate referrals. Within New Haven County, the following substance abuse counseling agencies exist:

The Connections Inc.	203-786-5316
APT Foundation, Inc.	203-781- 4600
Rushford Center	203-630- 5220
Cornell Hill Health Center	203-503- 3470

These agencies provide a variety of services which may include inpatient and outpatient substance abuse counseling, detoxification, residential and intensive outpatient programs, medication assistance treatment for opioid use disorders, and long-term care. Interested individuals are encouraged to contact each agency for additional information regarding specific services and costs.

## **Sanctions and Enforcement:**

Employees found violating the policy may be subject to disciplinary action including possible required participation in an approved alcohol and or drug treatment program. Additional disciplinary action may include termination of employment under applicable Board of Regents and State Universities regulations, University policies, statues, employment contracts, or collective bargaining agreements. There were no violations by employees of the Drug and Alcohol-Free workplace policy reported between the academic years of 2019-2021

### **C. Distribution of Alcohol and Other Drug Policies to Faculty, Staff, and Students**

As a requirement of these regulations, the University continues to disseminate and ensure receipt of the below policy/information to all students, staff, and faculty on an annual basis.

The university remains in compliance by implementing programs to prevent the abuse of alcohol and use or distribution of illicit drugs by its students and employees. The University maintains written policies on alcohol and other drugs and has a method for distributing this policy to all students and employees.

The annual notification required by the Drug Free Schools and Community Act is sent out electronically on an annual basis to all staff, faculty and students by the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students and provides the following information:

1. Standards of Conduct that prohibit unlawful possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on its property.
2. A description of health risks associated with the use of illicit drugs and abuse of alcohol.
3. A description of applicable legal sanctions under local, state, or federal law.
4. A description of counseling and treatment programs within New Haven community.
5. A description of the disciplinary sanctions the institution will impose on students and employees.

As an academic community, Southern Connecticut State University is committed to providing an environment in which learning and scholarship can flourish. The possession or use of illegal drugs, or the abuse of those which may otherwise be legally possessed, seriously affects the University environment, as well as the individual potential of our students and staff.

#### **IV. Alcohol and Other Drug Educational Prevention and Intervention Programs:**

##### **A. Alcohol and Other Drug Services**

Students who are referred from the Office of Student Conduct and Civic Responsibility are required to participate in one of the following AOD education programs facilitated by the Alcohol and Other Drug Coordinator:

**BASICS** is brief one-two session harm reduction educational program that assists students in exploring alcohol and marijuana use and their desire to change behavior.

**Alcohol WISE** is a prevention online educational course that provides students with information about the effects of Alcohol on the body, moderation, determining pattern of use and health risks associated with long term use.

##### **Screening Tools:**

**Alcohol-E-Check Up to Go (E-CHUG)**-a personalized brief screening tool to assess alcohol use.

**Marijuana-E-Check Up to Go (E-TOKE)**-a personalized brief screening tool to assess marijuana use.

**ScreenU Alcohol**- a free, confidential, alcohol risk assessment based on evidence-based strategies called SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment).

**ScreenU Prescription Drugs (Rx)**- a free, confidential, prescription drug risk assessment based on evidence-based strategies called SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment).

**ScreenU Cannabis**-a free, confidential, marijuana risk assessment based on evidence-based strategies called SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment).

The Coordinator of Alcohol and Drug Services, in addition to providing clinical assessments, brief counseling, support groups, and referral services continues to provide additional outreach services on campus with the intention of connecting students to services both on and off campus. The AOD Coordinator continuously works to build relationships with treatment agencies and recovery support programs to improve access for students seeking resources in the community.

##### **Professional Development Grant Funds**

In December 2020, Southern CT State University received grant funds in the amount of \$8,500.00 through the Connecticut Healthy Campus Initiative (CHCI), administered by Wheeler Clinic with funding from the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and support from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This funding is to support the efforts of institutions of higher education to prevent high-risk and underage drinking amongst students through providing professional development opportunities to staff and screening tools for students.

Funding from CHCI was used to join the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Drug Misuse Prevention and Recovery (HECAOD) as a member and receive campus-wide benefits, including access to brief intervention tools, resources, and technical assistance. HECAOD is the premier alcohol and drug misuse prevention and recovery resource for colleges and universities.

HECAOD developed ScreenU, a web-based program that allows SBIRT to be implemented with college students either independently or in partnership with a campus professional. The program identifies students who are misusing alcohol or prescription drugs and provides feedback and strategies to reduce their risk for experiencing negative consequences from their use.

ScreenU is a web-based tool that administers SBIRT (screening, brief intervention, referral to treatment) to an unlimited number of students for alcohol, prescription drugs and cannabis.

#### Professional Development Training and Education

Between March 2020 and October 2021, a series of professional development trainings were held virtually and offered to all staff, faculty, and students. These trainings were funded by the grant received through the Connecticut Healthy Campus Initiative (CHCI) administered by Wheeler Clinic. The trainings focused on topics which included substance use disorders, recovery practices and language, addiction, and trauma, medication assisted treatment for opioid use disorders, and gambling and gaming disorder. In October of 2020, “Uprooting Addiction”, a documentary film on addiction, trauma, and recovery, which featured six residents of Connecticut living with opioid use disorders, was shown on campus, followed by a panel discussion featuring the film’s producer who both produced and acted in the film. The art exhibit, “Living Proof” was displayed in the Lyman Performing Arts Center, which features the portraits and narratives of people living with Opioid Use Disorder from Southeastern Connecticut. The essays were displayed with stunning professional portraits by Fredrick Hartman that highlights each person’s individual essence of struggle and hope.

#### Opioid and Stimulant Use Education and Abuse Prevention:

Between April 2021, and December 2021, Southern has received a total of \$60,00.00 in grant funds from the Connecticut Healthy Campus Initiative to implement a campus opioid and stimulant education and awareness program. The State Opioid Response grant is designed to increase access to treatment, reduce unmet treatment needs, and reduce opioid overdose related deaths through the provision of prevention, treatment, and recovery activities for Opioid Use Disorder in addition, the scope of the SOR funding has been expanded to allow stimulant misuse to be addressed. According to the 2018 College Prescription Drug Study (<https://cssl.osu.edu/research-projects/college-prescription-drug-study>), 15.9% of students who completed the survey reported that they had ever used a stimulant for non-medical reasons.

The program goals are to increase knowledge of the dangers of opioid and stimulant misuse and overdose, raise awareness of on-campus resources and connect students, faculty, and staff with support and access to treatment and recovery resources, within the community. Classroom programs focus on opioid and stimulant use and overdose and provide free on-campus Naloxone trainings provide to anyone interested in information on identifying and responding to opioid overdose. Grant funds have allowed for the purchase of Narcan and public access Naloxone boxes along with AED machines which will be placed in each of the nine residential buildings.



### Collegiate Recovery Community (C.R.C)

The CRC at SCSU is support based and student-oriented with the goal of providing a resource for college students in long-term recovery, and for any student seeking recovery. Additionally, the CRC provides support and resources to students who have been directly or indirectly affected by the substance use of friends or loved ones. The CRC provides a recovery lounge space with a safe, supportive environment for students to receive peer-based support designed to facilitate their recovery, connection, engagement, and success. This space also serves as an entry point for students not yet in recovery, but who are seeking help and resources for substance use disorders. There are currently several pathways to recovery support groups on campus which include Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting, SMART recovery meetings, and support groups for students who identify as being Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA).

### The Wellness Center (AY 2019-2020)

A total of 238 events were held over the course of the 2019-2020 academic year, including special outreach events, resource fairs, orientation programs, classroom presentations, Narcan trainings, STI screening events, Flu Shot Clinics, survey implementation, and virtual programs. Fall semester events totaled 113 and 106 were held on campus during the spring; twelve after the campus switched to online due to COVID-19. Virtual events were a mixture of live events on Instagram, videos posted to YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram, and pre-recorded classroom programs requested by faculty. Outreach events reached a total of 5,700 students.

Grant-funded projects focused on alcohol, tobacco and opioids continued to reach many on campus. A 3-year grant concluded in the spring that was focused on reducing high risk alcohol use on campus by emphasizing a positive social norms campaign. In addition to rotating sixteen social norming message posters around campus, over 1,000 promotional items were distributed displaying these messages. The implementation of this social norms campaign increased communication, outreach, and education efforts on campus, and provided the office with important and timely data to support ongoing education and prevention work.

In particular, the 2020 survey provided valuable and promising data on students' perception of the campus environment regarding alcohol: 88% of students said the campus has alcohol and drug policies, and 73.9% of students said the campus is concerned about the prevention of drug and alcohol use. Compared to other campuses, just 9.8% feel that alcohol use is greater at Southern, 36.8 % feel that alcohol use is less and 53.4% feel alcohol use is about the same. In addition, most respondents (68.2%) said their friends would disapprove if they drank one or two drinks every day, and 67.3% said their friends would disapprove if they had five or more drinks at one sitting. Since 2008, reported alcohol use in the residence halls among SCSU students has decreased by 29.7%. Between 2017 and 2020 (the years of this grant), there was a 32.1% decrease in SCSU respondents who reported using alcohol in the residence halls.

The most significant challenge faced during this time was the abrupt transition to remote operations of the University on March 11, 2020, due to COVID-19. All work went remote, forcing the cancellation of all in-person events including educational sessions, tabling events, outreach, and the conclusion of survey implementation. While some programs were able to transition to remote and virtual settings, the reach was certainly less than typical on-campus programming. The Wellness Coordinator took on the role of the COVID-19 Coordinator to help manage the protocols and mitigation efforts of the pandemic and left her position in January 2021.

## The Wellbeing Center

The Wellness Center began a process of strategic rebranding and restructuring to become the Wellbeing Center. Located in Schwartz Hall, Room 100, on Fitch Street, The Wellbeing Center is intended to be a one-stop-shop for linkage to wellbeing support services, educational programming, and leadership development. The Wellbeing Center's mission is to create happier, healthier, and more successful students through the promotion of holistic wellbeing. The Wellbeing Center is designed to function as an integrated wellbeing hub that creates multi-departmental synergy in the delivery of comprehensive wellbeing related services. The Wellbeing Center is increasing its capacity to provide effective and engaging wellbeing education and preventative public health programming on a broad array of issues including, but not limited to health and fitness, nutrition, sleep, stress, sexual health, drug and alcohol use, mental health, disabilities, civic engagement, violence prevention, and advocacy. The Wellbeing Center's aim is to provide robust opportunities for wellbeing leadership development through peer education, training, and supervision. Thus far, the Wellbeing Center has engaged in classroom presentations, wellbeing related fairs, tabling events, pet therapy initiatives, educational training, weekly virtual and live THRIVE programming, and a THRIVE workshop series for enhancing their practical skills related to holistic mental and physical wellbeing. The Wellbeing Center was temporarily coordinated by an Outreach and Prevention Counselor from Counseling Services who left her position in December 2021. Strategic planning is underway to bring in additional staffing and structure to this critical center.

## The THRIVE Wellbeing Collaborative

The THRIVE Well-Being Collaborative was established in Fall, 2020 and replaced the previously established Wellbeing Committee. There are a variety of student affairs professionals represented in this collaborative, including representatives from the Dean of Students, Health Services, Wellbeing Center, Campus Recreation, Office of Student Conduct and Civic Responsibility, Disability Resource Center, Counseling Services, and Violence Prevention, Victim Advocacy and Support Center. The collaborative has been charged with developing and implementing strategic goals for the advancement of holistic health, mental health, and well-being efforts at Southern. Meetings are held every few weeks to review initiatives, efforts, and programming opportunities to enhance well-being on campus. For example, this collaborative hosts an annual Week of Well-Being at the start of the academic year in which a series of more than a dozen activities and events were offered to the Southern community, including resource fairs, health promotion events, and awareness campaigns. The collaborative conducted a review of the literature and best practices in wellbeing promotion to develop the comprehensive THRIVE framework focused on Togetherness, Health, Resilience, Insight, Vitality, and Equity. Daily virtual and live programming have been offered through collaborating departments supporting this framework, including Mindful Mondays, Togetherness Tuesdays, Wellbeing Wednesdays, Take-Action Thursdays (focused on Equity), and Fitness Fridays.

### Student Support Team

The Student Support Team (SST) consists of a variety of student affairs professionals including representatives from the Dean of Students Office, Student Involvement, Residential Life, Health Services, Wellness Center, Academic Advising, New Student and Sophomore Programs, Campus Recreation, Office of Student Conduct and Civic Responsibility, Disability Resource Center, Counseling Services, and Violence Prevention, Victim Advocacy and Support Center. This team gathers information from students, faculty, staff, and family members to provide a proactive, collaborative and coordinated approach to support students in distress. The SST addresses concerns about student behavior and personal issues, including mental health concerns, and strives to promote individual student well-being and success while maintain the overall safety of the campus community. This team meets weekly with the purpose of providing a confidential, respectful, and proactive model of support, while simultaneously promoting a positive, healthy, and safe student experience. Key objectives include identifying and gathering information about students of concern, assessing the information, and developing an effective response that addresses both the needs of the student and the safety of the campus community, and to implement a plan of action in such a way that de-escalates potential crises, reduces, and removes any potential threats, and attends to the specific needs of the individual student. This team has benefited from the recent addition of a new, full-time, case manager in the Dean of Student's Office, in addition to continued outreach an updated informational folder that has been provided to various academic programs and campus community members on how to appropriately recognize, respond, and refer students in distress.

### Residence Life Staff Training

All Resident Advisors and Residence Hall Directors receive training on the University's alcohol and drug protocol and policies. Resident Advisors are responsible for three educational programs per semester, with one of the three being a life skills program which often can include alcohol and other drugs. During the time frame of 2019 through 2021, resident advisors held twenty-one alcohol and drug prevention programs in the residence halls. Th decline in the numbers of educational programs was primarily due to COVID-19 given that fewer students were living on campus.

The Coordinator of Alcohol and Other Drug Services provides training to all eighty-five Resident Advisors on an annual basis in August prior to the start of the academic year. The training aims to educate Resident Advisors on how to identify signs of an alcohol or drug problem including opioid and stimulant abuse, risks associated with the abuse of alcohol and other drugs and how to refer and support a student who needs mental health or substance abuse services. Resident Advisors are also trained on how to be a recovery ally to support students in recovery who reside in the residence halls.

### New Student and Transfer Student Orientation

Every summer, first-year students (freshmen) and transfer students participate in several orientation and transition activities to help them prepare for their first semester. In 2020 and 2021 the modality changed significantly but included numerous ways in which first-year students were

required to participate in educational programs focused on substance abuse including alcohol and other drugs, bystander intervention, and making healthy choices. Through our digital orientation platform (online asynchronous orientation program) we provide information to help educate and inform students of resources available to them at Southern. Through our online synchronous and in-person orientation programs, which take place in June and just days prior to the semester beginning, we discuss these issues as part of larger conversations regarding community responsibilities. While transfer students were not required to participate in orientation programs, they are highly encouraged.

## V. Alcohol and Other Drug Program Goals:

1. Provide educational programs and implement prevention screening tools on alcohol and other drugs, mental health, and holistic health related topics to empower students to make responsible decisions regarding their health and personal safety.

**Assessment:** Students receive education on alcohol and other drugs and wellbeing related topics through in-person and virtual classroom presentations, residence hall programs and campus wide outreach, including wellbeing center activities and during the Week of Welcome programs. Southern Connecticut State University's alcohol and other drug programs and events are aimed at providing education to students about the risk factors associated with the abuse of alcohol and other drugs and implementing harm reduction strategies for reducing high-risk use among students.

2. Increase awareness across all campus departments about the comprehensive THRIVE framework focused on Togetherness, Health, Resilience, Insight, Vitality, and Equity.

**Assessment:** The collaborative has been charged with developing and implementing strategic goals for the advancement of holistic health, mental health, and well-being efforts at Southern. Daily virtual and in-person programming has been offered through collaborating departments supporting this framework. The sharing of information about resources and services on campus at both Counseling Services and Wellbeing Center events has assisted in helping students gain greater access to supports on campus.

3. Increase access to treatment, reduce unmet treatment need, and reduce risk for opioid overdose related deaths through the provision of harm reduction, prevention, treatment, and recovery activities for opioid use disorder.

**Assessment:** The AOD Coordinator has established relationships with community organizations and agencies that provide both MAT and recovery supports, which has created opportunities for new partnerships and provided students with increased access to services both on and off campus. Grant funding has allowed for opioid overdose training to be offered to all staff, faculty and students and the dispensing of medical disposable bags across campus to encourage safe disposal of medication.

4. Improve access to screening tools and harm reduction efforts aimed at reducing high risk use of marijuana, including the use of edibles, with the recent legalization of marijuana in Connecticut and surrounding states.

**Assessment:** The AOD Coordinator secured funding through Connecticut Healthy Campus Initiative, (CHCI) to join the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Drug Misuse Prevention and Recovery (HECAOD) as a member and receive campus-wide benefits, including access to brief intervention tools and resources aimed at reducing high-risk use of marijuana and prescription drugs. A harm reduction psychoeducational group for students looking to reduce use of marijuana is also offered to any student seeking counseling on campus.

5. Enhance outreach efforts on campus to increase awareness and an understanding among students of the Good Samaritan Medical Amnesty Policy which encourages members of the SCSU community to call emergency personnel for any person in need of medical attention in the case of an alcohol or drug overdose.

**Assessment:** Students are provided with information about the Good Samaritan Medical Amnesty Policy during NSO, New Owl's Weekend, classroom presentations and at other alcohol and drug educational programs throughout the academic year. The residence life staff receive training at the start of the fall semester during RA training and provide additional education to students about the amnesty policy through educational programs in the residence halls.

6. Expand outreach efforts and recovery resources to support students struggling with process addictions which could include gambling, gaming, technology, and pornography.

**Assessment:** The Coordinator of Alcohol and Drug Services provides resources and access to screening tools for students which aim to increase awareness about process addictions and encourage students to utilize support groups and treatment services both on and off-campus. The AOD Coordinator works in coordination with community partners and organizations such as the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling (CCPG), to offer trainings and on campus screenings to students, staff, and faculty.

## **VI. SCSU AOD Program Strengths:**

1. The institution provides clear and comprehensive guidelines for students and employees regarding its alcohol and drug policies and continues to maintain a drug and alcohol-free workplace.
2. The University employs professional staff with appropriate training and licensure to address issues of alcohol and other drug use/abuse by students and staff in addition to contracting with third party vendors to provide employees with treatment services.
3. The newly established THRIVE Well-being Collaborative has implemented strategic goals for the advancement of mental health, holistic health and well-being efforts on campus, allowing for greater collaboration between departments within the Division of Student Affairs. The THRIVE framework focused on Togetherness, Health, Resilience, Insight, Vitality, and Equity.
4. The Coordinator of Alcohol and Drug Services is a member of NAADAC, AHRE and the Connecticut Healthy Campus Statewide Initiative (CHCI), which supports campus level alcohol and other drug prevention efforts through trainings, workshops and grant funded opportunities.

5. The University implemented a Good Samaritan Medical Amnesty Statement that encourages students to call emergency personnel for any person in need of medical attention in the case of an alcohol or drug overdose.
6. The University provides clinical services, resources, and educational programs on-campus to promote safety and to educate students on risk factors associated with the abuse of alcohol and other drugs.
7. SCSU University Police track the number of alcohol and drug related offenses monthly and work in coordination with the Office of Student Conduct and Civic Responsibility to ensure the safety of our students, staff, and faculty.
8. The SCSU Student Support Team(SST) meets weekly to discuss students of concern, including students who may be at risk for developing a substance use disorder and who are in need of mental health and substance abuse services.
9. The Coordinator of Alcohol and Drug Services established a collegiate recovery community that offers recovery-oriented activities and multiple pathways to recovery meetings on campus to support students seeking recovery and for any student in long-term recovery from a substance abuse disorder.
10. Additional screening tools for marijuana and harm reduction-based peer groups were implemented in response to the increase of marijuana use among college students over the past two years as legalization of marijuana has grown in the region.
11. External grant funding secured by the Coordinator of Alcohol and Other Drug Services has allowed for professional development training, enhanced prevention, and outreach activities related to high-risk alcohol use, opioid, and stimulant education, awareness, and response.

## **VII. SCSU AOD Program Weaknesses:**

1. While many of the alcohol and other drug educational programs focus on reaching first year residential students, additional outreach efforts are needed to engage commuter students who are also in need of supports and services.
2. With the rise in opioid overdose deaths increasing since the spring of 2020 across the region due to fentanyl, additional education and prevention efforts aimed at harm reduction, like fentanyl testing strips, may be warranted to increase awareness about the risks associated with the use of opioids and other drugs.
3. Increased efforts are needed to educate students on the health risks associated with the use of high potency marijuana, edibles, and the potential for fentanyl laced substances due to the rise in use among college age students.
4. Despite the Good Samaritan Medical Amnesty policy being implemented on campus back in 2014, there continues to be a hesitancy among students to report an incident on campus for fear of punitive consequences. Increased visibility about the policy is necessary to encourage students to call to prevent an alcohol or drug overdose.

## **SCSU AOD Program Recommendations:**

The DFSCA 2019 program recommendations highlighted the importance of continuing to provide prevention and educational programming that focused on reducing high risk alcohol use and educating students about risks associated with opioids and prescription drugs. The grant funding from the Connecticut Healthy Campus Initiative (CHCI), and membership with HECAOD provided greater access to brief intervention tools aimed at preventing and reducing alcohol and marijuana use amongst students. All staff, faculty and students were informed about the Campus Opioid Overdose Prevention policy which was implemented in January 2020 and were provided additional resources and education on opioid use disorder including a training on Medicated Assisted Treatment (MAT), and naloxone training. One of the 2019 DFSCA report recommendations was to enhance parental involvement in addressing alcohol and drug use among students which has been challenging but we continue to explore other mechanisms by which to remind parents of the importance of communicating with their students about the risks associated with alcohol and other drugs.

The program recommendations for this review are outlined below:

1. Inform the campus community about the importance of Naloxone in response to opioid overdoses, this will help to prepare the university community for the installation of public access Narcan boxes and AED machines which will be placed in all nine of the residence halls in the fall of 2022.
2. Given our anticipated relationship with the JED foundation, SCSU will undergo a comprehensive review of wellbeing, mental health, suicide prevention and alcohol and other drug policies, programs, and services, with a goal of enhancing these in the years to come.
3. Further enhance outreach efforts on campus to create more awareness about process addictions internet misuse, gaming and gambling addiction among college age students particularly given the recent legalization of sports betting in Connecticut in the fall of 2021.
4. Continue to implement prevention strategies that focus on educating students about the risks associated with high-risk drinking while enhancing efforts to address the abuse of opioids and stimulants.
5. Respond to increased use of marijuana and edibles by providing factual information, harm reduction strategies, and accessible cessation support.