MACU Substance Abuse Education Program

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this proposal is to describe and recommend features of a multi-faceted critical response program designed to assist and protect Students of Mid-America Christian University, who has received a referral to the MACU Substance Abuse Education Program for a conduct violation involving drugs and/or alcohol. The focus of the program is as follows: prevention and intervention-focused education, substance abuse assessment, enhancement of the individuals’ understanding of drug and/or alcohol impact on their lives, as well as the lives of others in the community. This program's design is to be facilitative and constructive, not punitive. It is also designed to serve as a deterrent and a diversion from the criminal justice system. “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit. Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:18-20).

MISSION OF PROGRAM

The mission of the Substance Abuse Education Program is to better prepare and protect students of Mid-America Christian University from the dangers of misuse and abuse of alcohol and other mood/mind altering substances, in a manner consistent with the Christ-based mission of the University.

STATEMENT OF NEED

In keeping with Mid-America Christian University’s (MACU) commitment to provide a safe and healthy academic and work environment, the University maintains a drug and alcohol free campus. The University will not permit drugs or alcohol use on its property or while acting in a capacity representing the University. This policy applies to all property (both the interior and exterior of such property) owned, operated, or managed by the University, including all buildings, facilities and grounds. Such premises include, but are not limited to University housing, athletic facilities, parking lots, offices, classrooms, restrooms, hallways, stairwells, drive ways, sidewalks and lawns. This policy also applies to vehicles
owned or leased by the University or under university control, as well as at any off-property university-sponsored meeting or event.

The Drug Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 require an institution of higher education to certify to the U.S. Department of Education by 10-1-90, that it has adopted and implemented a program to prevent the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees in order to remain eligible for federal financial assistance of any kind. An illicit drug is the non-medical use of a variety of drugs that are prohibited by international law. These drugs include: amphetamine-type stimulants, cannabis, cocaine, heroin and other opioids, and MDMA (ecstasy).

This policy is adopted by MACU to comply with this statutory directive and encourage a culture of compliance. The university is committed to providing education regarding the negative impacts of illicit drug use, misuse of prescription drugs, and the excessive or illegal consumption of alcohol. Any student or employee of the University who has violated this prohibition shall be subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion, termination of employment, referral for prosecution and/or completion, at the individual's expense, of an appropriate rehabilitation program. All disciplinary action shall be taken in accordance with applicable policies of the University.

The University will distribute policies and establishes a training program designed to educate the MACU community in the recognition of drug and/or alcohol abuse symptoms related to work performance in the workplace and classroom; classroom behaviors, and in handling these problems in a progressive and confidential manner. This training will occur as needed and will be conducted by certified individuals.

While many colleges and universities offer counseling and crisis intervention to students in crisis, those services are often accessed by self-referred individuals, or by professional referral sources who have detected critical problems during official interaction with the student in crisis. In other words, dramatic, catalytic events usually propel the student(s) into access to services. The same holds true for students who are identified as “first-caught” offenders who have been identified and/or apprehended for alcohol-related offenses, such as minor in possession of alcohol, providing alcoholic beverages to minors, being in actual physical control of a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol, driving while impaired, driving while intoxicated, as well as sundry offenses related to other mood/mind-altering substances. Often times, entry into the criminal justice system is the catalyst for students to become involuntarily introduced into the criminal justice system. The MACU Department of Public Safety is proposing an educational diversion program to assist students, by developing an understanding of the effects of drug and alcohol.

Alternatively, provision of information to those students, as well as other yet-undetected students in need of services, is largely confined to available multi-media and printed informational materials, which
often fall on deaf ears and veiled eyes. Students who are engaging in risky behaviors connected to consumption of mood/mind-altering substances, quite frankly, often exhibit an attitude that they are “invincible,” “already aware” of the inherent risks, but that the probability of those risks affecting their lives is minimal or non-existent.

Furthermore, many colleges and universities do not actively employ formal training program for milieu-placed, formally-trained student (peer) support volunteers who are MOST likely to detect early warning signs, or attract the students in need due to their lack of official status, and peer-established trust and rapport. In addition to other forms of pro-active services designed to engage students in early detection, self-evaluation, prevention, interdiction, and intervention, there is a need on our college campuses for increased and enhanced peer support services, as well as education and training in detection, intervention, and referral of students in crisis to formal assistive services (Johnson, 2014, 2014a; Johnson & Bogan, 1986).

This proposal have is in need on the campus of Mid-America Christian University for an array of services designed to circumvent the tragic results which often accompany misuse and abuse of mood/mind-altering substances by the student body of the University, and to proactively focus on the offering early-implemented services which will interrupt the involuntary introduction of the affected student into the criminal justice system, while providing the necessary “shock and awe” affect which may be necessary to positively affect their problem-laden decision-making processes, as well as provide them with tools and information necessary to alter their behavior and life direction in a positive manner.

CORE PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The core Substance Abuse Education Program would consist of the following components:

- **Alcohol-Drug Assessment**
  - This service to students will be conducted by local, authorized and licensed mental health and substance-abuse treatment professionals, who will offer insight, formal assessment, and access to various services within a global continuum of care. We may also use free online assessments available depending on availability of financial resources.

- **One on One Sessions**
  - A vocabulary lessons that will define key terms that students may need to fully develop an understanding to be familiar with in the program.
Real life examples of how drugs can destroy lives. These examples and illustrations will be used to assist the learning process and facilitate a better understanding of the subject.

Encourage students to report how they use the information they learned about drugs and encourage them to apply what they have learned.

Encourage students to spread the drug/alcohol free message by initiating or participating in activities to promote awareness and prevention.

- **Victim Impact Awareness Experience**
  - This component will consist of exposure to the life stories of various individuals who have been detrimentally impacted by substance abuse and/or addiction both via presentations within the Solution that Kills curriculum, and a visit to the Cleveland County Jail to hear from current inmates serving time for alcohol-related offenses.

- **AA / NA Open Meeting Attendance**
  - The students will be required to attend a minimum of two local community “open” meetings of either Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous.

- **Written Essay Assignments**
  - The students will be required to write two 750 - 1000-word essays on topics related to their experience with alcohol and/or other mood/mind-altering substances (to be assigned).

- **Random Urine-Toxicology Testing**
  - As a condition within their individual performance contract with the University, the student may be required to submit to random Urine Toxicology testing, to document whether or not the student is complying with the “Abstinence” condition of their student contract.

- **Community Service**
  - The student will be required to complete a certain number of “community service hours,” at locations to be designated by the University. The targeted sites for community service will consist of milieu that will directly further the educational and rehabilitative goals of the program.

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING CURRICULUM**

The proposal has structured the educational component of the Substance Abuse Education Program to be educational, as well as facilitative of the growth and healing process. All services pertaining to evaluation, coaching, or any other core function recognized as “therapy” will be provided by duly
licensed or certified individuals whose professional function includes the treatment of drug and alcohol disorders, and any other ancillary afflictions. Those licensed and certified professionals will be identified, selected, recruited, consulted, and relied upon to provide treatment services based upon statutory requirements set forth by the State of Oklahoma’s Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. The Educational Group sessions are as follows:

- Session One: What Brought You Here
- Session Two: Misuse, Abuse, Addiction, and More
- Session Three: The Family Disease
- Session Four: The Truth about Drugs
- Session Five: Empowerment: Coping Skills and Strategies
- Session Six: Recovery Programs and Continuum of Care
- Session Seven: Self-Assessment / Wrap-Up / Take-aways

NOTE: Session Five, “Empowerment: Coping Skills and Strategies,” is an overview of more comprehensive content included in a course written by the Author, entitled: “The Way Out of the Box Workshop.” Both the general overview session and the 16-hour course includes the following topics:

- Dealing with Stress, Worry, and Time Bandits.
- Dealing with Painful Feelings.
- Dealing with Problems.
- Dealing with Tough Decision.
- Dealing with Interpersonal Conflict.
- Dealing with Peer Pressure.

CONCLUSION

This Program Description is being submitted for approval by Jessica Rimmer (Vice President for Student Affairs and Engagement Development), Alison Walls (Director of Student Life), and/or other designated officials at Mid-America Christian University, in hope that the addition of this program to the University environment will result in the protection of lives and quality of life for MACU students.

REFERENCES


