

Policies Related to Alcohol/Drug Abuse

In compliance with federal government regulations for a drug-free workplace for students and employees. Any student caught in possession, use, or distribution of illegal substances or paraphernalia will be dismissed and/or referred to the appropriate agency. Students convicted for any offense, during a period enrollment for which the student was receiving Title IV funds, under any federal or state law involving possession or sale of illegal drugs will result in the loss of eligibility for any Title IV assistance.

This policy strictly prohibits the illegal use, possession, manufacture, dispensing, or distribution of alcohol, drugs or controlled substances in the workplace, on its premises, or as a part of all school sponsored activities. A violation of this policy is considered a major offense, which may result in requirement for satisfactory participation in a drug or alcohol rehabilitation program, referral for criminal prosecution, and/or immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment and suspension or expulsion from the school. A criminal conviction is not required for sanctions to be imposed upon an employee or student for violations of this policy. Violations of applicable local, state and federal laws may subject a student or employee to a variety of legal sanctions including but not limited to fines, incarceration, imprisonment and/or community service requirements. Convictions become a part of an individual's criminal record and may prohibit certain career and professional opportunities.

The following information is provided in accordance with the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-690, Title V, Subtitle D) and the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (P.L. 101-226).

Health Risks

Health risks generally associated with alcohol and drug abuse can result in but are not limited to a lowered immune system, damage to critical nerve cells, physical dependency, lung damage, heart problems, liver disease, physical and mental depression, increased infection, irreversible memory loss, personality changes and thought disorders. The use of alcohol and other drugs represents a serious threat to health and the quality of life. More than 25,000 people die each year from drug-related accidents or health problems. With most drugs, it is possible that users will develop psychological and physical dependence. The general categories of drugs and their effects are as follows:

Alcohol produces short-term effects that include behavioral changes, impairment of judgment and coordination, greater likelihood of aggressive acts, respiratory depression, irreversible physical and mental abnormalities in newborns (fetal alcohol syndrome) and death. Long-term effects of alcohol abuse include damage to the liver, heart and brain; ulcers; gastritis; malnutrition; delirium tremens; and cancer. Alcohol combined with barbiturates and other depressants can prove to be a deadly mixture.

Amphetamines/Stimulants (speed, uppers, crank, caffeine, etc.) speed up the nervous system and can cause increased heart and breathing rates, higher blood pressure, decreased appetite, headaches, blurred vision, dizziness, sleeplessness, anxiety, hallucinations, paranoia, depression, convulsions and death due to a stroke or heart failure.

Anabolic steroids seriously affect the liver, cardiovascular and reproductive systems. Can cause sterility in males and females as well as impotency in males.

Barbiturates/Depressants (downers, quaaludes, valium, etc.) slow down the central nervous system and can cause decreased heart and breathing rates, lowered blood pressure, slowed reactions, confusion, distortion of reality, convulsions, respiratory depression, coma and death. Depressants combined with alcohol can be lethal.

Cocaine/Crack stimulates the central nervous system and is extremely addictive, both psychologically and physically. Effects include dilated pupils, increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure, insomnia, loss of appetite, hallucinations, paranoia, seizures and death due to cardiac arrest or respiratory failure.

Hallucinogens (PCP, angel dust, LSD, etc.) interrupt the functions of the part of the brain that controls the intellect

and instincts. May result in self-inflicted injuries, impaired coordination, dulled senses, incoherent speech, depression, anxiety, violent behavior, paranoia, hallucinations, increased heart rate and blood pressure, convulsions, coma, and heart and lung failure.

Cannabis (marijuana, hashish, hash, etc.) impairs short-term memory comprehension, concentration, coordination and motivation. May also cause paranoia and psychosis. Marijuana smoke contains more cancer-causing agents than tobacco smoke. The way in which marijuana is smoked - deeply inhaled and held in the lungs for a long period - enhances the risk of getting cancer. Combined with alcohol, marijuana can produce a dangerous multiplied effect.

Narcotics (heroin, morphine, demerol, percodan, etc.) initially produce feelings of euphoria often followed by drowsiness, nausea and vomiting. An overdose may result in convulsions, coma and death. Tolerance develops rapidly and dependence is likely. Using contaminated syringes to inject such drugs may result in AIDS.

Tobacco/nicotine causes death among some 170,000 people in the United States each year due to smoking-related coronary heart disease. Some 30 percent of the 130,000 cancer deaths each year are linked to smoking. Lung, larynx, esophagus, bladder, pancreas and kidney cancers strike smokers at increased rates. Emphysema and chronic bronchitis are 10 times more likely among smokers.

Punishment for Alcohol and Drug Related Crimes State of Texas

The Texas Health and Safety Code sets the possession law, dividing controlled substances into five penalty groups, plus a marijuana category. While some of the substances are legal, it is illegal to possess them without a prescription, and the health code establishes the punishments for illegal possession.

Penalty Group	Examples of Drugs/Controlled Substances
1	Cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, GHB, ketamine, oxycodone and hydrocodone.
1A	LSD
2	Ecstasy, PCP and mescaline.
3	Valium, Xanax and Ritalin.
4	Compounds containing Dionine, Motofen, Buprenorphine or Pryovalerone

Penalty Group 1

Weight	Classification	Penalty
Less than one gram	State jail felony	180 days to 2 years in a state jail and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
1 gram or more, less than 4 grams	Third-degree felony	2 to 10 years in a state prison and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
4 grams or more, but less than 200 grams	Second-degree felony	2 to 20 years in a state prison and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
200 grams or more, but less than 400 grams	First-degree felony	5 to 99 years in a state prison and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
400 grams or more	Enhanced first-degree felony	10 to 99 years and a fine of not more than \$100,000

Penalty Group 1A

Amount	Classification	Penalty
Fewer than 20 units	State jail felony	180 days to 2 years in a state jail and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
20 or more units, but less than 80 units	Third-degree felony	2 to 10 years in a state prison and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
80 units or more, but less than 4,000 units	Second-degree felony	2 to 20 years in a state prison and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
4,000 units or more, but less than 8,000 units	First-degree felony	5 to 99 years in a state prison and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
8,000 units or more	Enhanced first-degree felony	15 to 99 years in a state prison and a fine of not more than \$250,000

Penalty Group 2

Weight	Classification	Penalty
Less than one gram	State jail felony	180 days to 2 years in a state jail and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
More than 1 gram, less than 4 grams	Third-degree felony	2 to 10 years in a state prison and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
More than 4 grams, less than 400 grams	Second-degree felony	2 to 20 years in a state prison and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
400 grams or more	Enhanced first-degree felony	5 to 99 years and a fine of not more than \$50,000

Penalty Groups 3 and 4

Weight	Classification	Penalty
Less than 28 grams	Class A misdemeanor	Not more than 1 year in a county jail and/or a fine of not more than \$4,000
28 grams or more, but less than 200 grams	Third-degree felony	2 to 10 years in a state prison and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
200 grams or more, but less than 400 grams	Second-degree felony	2 to 20 years in a state prison and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000
400 grams or more	Enhanced first-degree felony	5 to 99 years and a fine of not more than \$50,000

The Texas Tax Code, in addition to the criminal penalties for drug possession, also sets potential civil penalties. Although the statute is not often used in minor possession cases, the code requires that taxes must be paid on illegal drugs, so that “dealers” who possess over certain amounts can be charged with tax evasion. The state of Texas can also suspend your license for up to six months following a conviction on any violation of the Texas Controlled Substances Act.

The Code of Criminal Procedure also allows police to seize any property used or “intended to be used” in the commission of a drug felony. That means they can take your car, your home, or any other belonging where you are accused of carrying or hiding drugs. The asset forfeiture law is a civil action, not criminal, and you don’t have to be convicted for the state to try to take your property. Drug possession penalties are complicated, and depend on the classification of the substance and the quantity.

Possession of Drug Paraphernalia:

Any item that can be used as a drug processing, packaging, or consumption mechanism can be defined as paraphernalia under 481.002 (17) of the Texas Controlled Substances Act. Even common household items such as scales, spoons, bowls, envelopes or bags can land you an illegal possession of paraphernalia charge. The most common paraphernalia charges result from pipes, and bongs.

Simple possession of drug paraphernalia is a Class C Misdemeanor, which carries a penalty of fines up to \$500.

Distribution or possession with intent to distribute or sell drug paraphernalia is a Class A misdemeanor, which can result in up to a year in jail. Second offense penalties will result in mandatory jail time, or if you sell to someone under 18 years old.

Federal Law

OFFENSE	MINIMUM PUNISHMENT	MAXIMUM PUNISHMENT
Manufacture, distribution or dispensing drugs (includes marijuana)	A term of imprisonment for up to 5 years, and a fine of \$250,000.	A term of life imprisonment without release (no eligibility for parole) and a fine not to exceed \$8,000,000 (for an individual) or \$20,000,000 (if other than an individual).
Possession of drugs (includes marijuana)	Imprisonment for up to 1 years, and a fine of \$1,000.	Imprisonment for not more than 20 years or not less than 5 years, a fine of not less than \$5,000 plus costs of investigation and prosecution.
Operation of a Common Carrier under the influence of alcohol or drugs		Imprisonment for up to 15 years and a fine not to exceed \$250,000.

Referral and Hotline Information

The school does not offer professional counseling services but offers the following recourse information:

National Institution on Drug Abuse (M-F, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) 1 -800-662-HELP

National Alcohol & Drug Abuse Hotline 1-800-234-0420

Cocaine Helpline 1-800-COCAINE

Reach-Out Hotline 1-800-522-9054

(Alcohol, drug-crisis, intervention, mental health referral)