



**FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS**



RESEARCH IN STUDENT AFFAIRS

Summary of PAR Birthday Survey

Nov 2004

Abstract

The percentage of students responding in each category for number of drinks on their birthday remained relatively the same. Reported alcohol consumption on the day of the birthday ranged from students that reported not drinking at all to students that reported they had 12 or more drinks. For April birthdays, 18 percent stated they had no drinks on their birthday while 24 percent stated they had 12 or more drinks. For Oct/Nov birthdays, the responses were 17 percent stating they consumed no alcohol while 24 percent reported they had 12 or more drinks.

Our survey results also support the supposition that students perceive more drinking taking place on campus than actually occurs - at least on the student's 21st birthdays. Our survey shows **60 percent** of the students thought that **80 percent** of the students would have **5 or more** drinks on their birthday however only **60 percent** of FSU students reported that they had 5 or more drinks

Purpose

As part of a research effort initiated by the University of Florida, FSU participated in a research project to determine the level of use of alcohol by students turning 21 years of age on their birthday. The purpose of the data gathering is to collaborate with University of Florida and establish some baseline information about the use of alcohol by Florida State University students. One long-term goal of this data collection effort is to develop strategies for the Partnership for Alcohol Responsibility [P.A.R.] initiatives at FSU.

Methodology

The Director of Partnership for Alcohol Responsibility at Florida State University was asked to participate in a study of how college students spend their 21st birthday by the University of Florida staff. The University of Florida research project sent coupons to students prior to their 21st birthday [for either ice cream or a movie sitting] to be redeemed on the students' birthday and then surveyed them on the use of these coupons and use of alcohol. One hypothesis of this

project is to determine if students will not drink or will drink less if offered other incentives and activities. FSU served as a cohort group – surveying students about their activities but did not offer incentives.

Prior to survey administration, the protocols for the survey were reviewed and approved by the FSU University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects. The survey was administered by the Office of Vice-President for Students Affairs research staff via the Internet and used e-mail addresses obtained from the Registrar's office. Students gave their consent to participate by reading and acknowledging the online disclaimer. All FSU students identified as having a 21st birthday in the month of April - 488 students – were sent e-mail messages containing the link to the survey within one week after their birth date; our response rate was 181 [37 percent]. FSU also repeated this process for October- November of 2004 and received 172 responses of 449 [38 percent].

Results

Alternative Activities

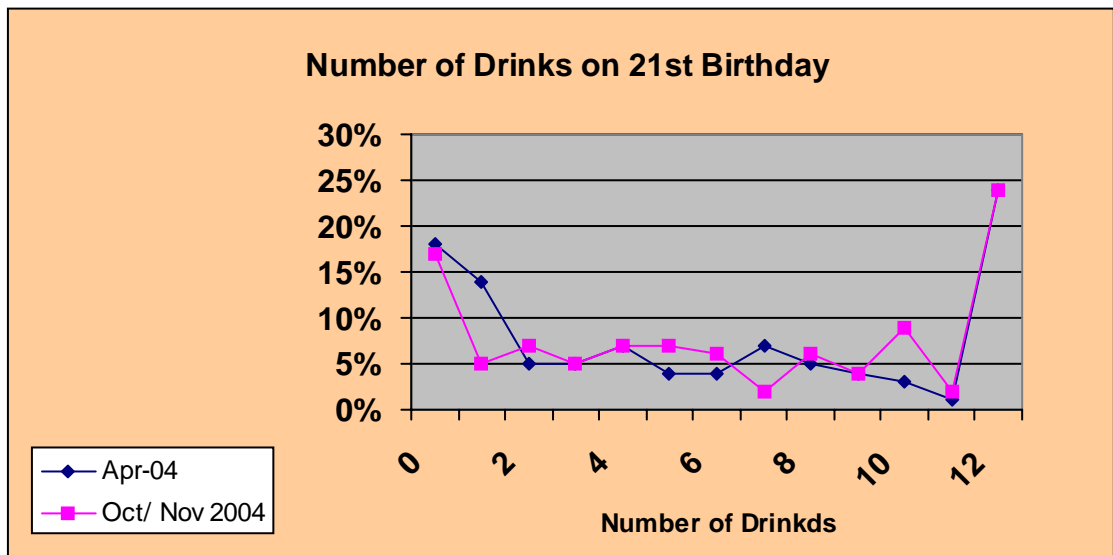
- We asked if the student went to an ice cream shop on their birthday – in order for us to serve as a control we mirrored U.F.'s survey and retained this question- 95 percent stated no in the first survey and 97 percent stated no in the second one.
- When asked if they had gone to a movie theater on their 21st birthday, 94 percent stated no in the first survey and the percentage increased slightly to 96 in the second survey.
- 78 percent stated that they had gone out to eat on their birthday in the first survey and 81 percent in the second survey. 98 percent responded that they had talked to their parents or legal guardian on their birthday; 96 percent in the second survey.
- In the first survey, 44 percent stated they went out with their significant other while 48 percent did in the second.

Use of Alcohol

The percentages of students responding in each category for number of drinks on their birthday remained relatively the same. Reported alcohol consumption on the day of the birthday ranged from students that reported not drinking at all to students that reported they had 12 or more drinks. The range of responses was polarized- for April birthdays as well as the October/November birthdays. For April birthdays, 18 percent stated they had no drinks on their birthday while 24 percent stated they had 12 or more drinks. For Oct/Nov birthdays, the responses were similar to the first set. See table and graph below (may total to more than 100 due to rounding).

Table A

Number of drinks	Percent of students on 21 birthday- <u>April 2004</u> <u>Group</u>	Cumulative Total for Under 5 and 5 or more drinks	Percent of students on 21 birthday – <u>Oct/Nov 2004</u> <u>Group</u>	Cumulative Total for Under 5 and 5 or more drinks
None	18		17	
1-2	19		12	
3-4	11	48% - less than 5 drinks	12	41% - less than 5 drinks
5-6	11		13	
7-8	9		9	
9-10	8		13	
11	Less than 1		Less than 2	
12 or more	24	52%- five drinks or more	24	60%- five drinks or more



We also asked the students the effects of their drinking. For example, in the April 04 survey, 43 percent of respondents stated they had a hangover while 19 percent stated they had a memory loss.

In the Oct/Nov 04 survey, hangover and memory loss were also the main experience students reported to have after their 21st birthday drinking - 33 percent and 22 percent respectively. See Table B for results.

Table B

<i>Consequence</i>	<i>Percent (Apr-04)</i>	<i>Percent (Oct/Nov-04)</i>
Hangover	43	33
Vomited	21	18
Drove a car while under the influence	4	2
Memory loss - blackout	19	22
Did something I later regretted	5	8
Hurt or Injured	3	5
Unplanned sexual activity	4	4
Unprotected sexual activity	3	5

We asked the students how many alcoholic drinks they had the last time they partied- not including their 21st birthday. A much lower percent of students reported they had 12 or more drinks the last time they partied as opposed to on their birthday- 5 percent compared to 24 percent.

The same pattern applies for students with Oct/Nov birthdays-6 percent to 24 percent. However, one thing may worth mentioning that the percentage of non-drink students in their “last time” party or social was 7 percentage points lower in the Oct/Nov birthday survey. Correspondingly, the percentage of students who have 5-6 drinks on the same occasion increased by 6 percentage points. [See Table C].

TABLE C	<i>Percent of students on birthday (Apr-04)</i>	<i>Percent of students last time they “partied”</i>	<i>Percent of students on birthday (Oct/Nov- 04)</i>	<i>Percent of students last time they “partied”</i>
None	18	27	17	10
1-2	19	14	12	16
3-4	11	27	12	27
5-6	11	14	13	20
7-8	9	8	9	11
9-10	8	4	13	8
11	Less than 1	1	Less than 2	1
12 or more	24	5	24	6

Perceptions

In the April birthday survey, while **52 percent** of the FSU students reported drinking 5 or more drinks [Table A], most of these students- **70 percent** – responded that they *thought* **60 percent** or more of all students would drink **5 or more** drinks on their birthday. This comparison supports the supposition that students perceive more drinking taking place on campus than actually occurs - at least on the student 21st birthdays.

This trend is also found in the Oct/Nov birthday survey, where **60 percent** of the students thought that **80 percent** of the students would have **5 or more** drinks on their birthday however only **60 percent** of FSU students stated that they had 5 or more drinks. [See Table D and E]

Table D

	<u>Actual Percent of FSU Students surveyed who Reported Drinking 5 or More Drinks on their Birthday</u>	<u>Percent of FSU Students that the Students surveyed <i>Think or Believe</i> had 5 or more drinks on their Birthday</u>
<u>April 2004 birthday group</u>	52% of FSU students reported drinking 5 or more drinks	70% of FSU students believed that 60% [or higher] of all FSU students had 5 or more drinks on their birthday.
<u>Oct/Nov 2004 birthday Group</u>	60% of FSU students reported drinking 5 or more drinks	80% of FSU students believed that 60% [or higher] of all FSU students had 5 or more drinks on their birthday.

Table E

Question: In your opinion, what percentage of students on campus had 5 or more drinks on their 21st birthday?	Percent of FSU Students that the students we surveyed <i>think or believe</i> had 5 or more drinks <u>(April 2004 Group)</u>	Comments	Percent of FSU Students that the students we surveyed <i>think or believe</i> had 5 or more drinks <u>(Oct/Nov 2004 Group)</u>	Comments
0%	0.55%		0.00%	
10%	2.76%		0.70%	
20%	2.76%		1.40%	
30%	6.63%		3.50%	
40%	6.63%		3.50%	
		30 percent thought 0% to 50% of FSU students would have 5 or more drinks		20 percent thought 0% to 50% of FSU students would have 5 or more drinks
50%	11.05%		10.49%	
60%	11.05%		11.89%	
70%	16.02%		17.48%	
80%	24.31%		19.58%	
90%	14.92%		25.17%	
		70 percent thought 60% or more FSU students would have 5 or more		80 percent thought 60% or more of FSU students would have 5 or more
100%	3.31%		6.29%	

APPENDICE A
21st Birthday Survey Questions

1. Did you go to an ice cream shop on your 21st birthday?
 Yes No
2. Did you go to the movie theater on your 21st birthday?
 Yes No
3. Did you go out to eat on your 21st birthday?
 Yes No
4. Did you talk to your mother, father or legal guardian on your 21st birthday?
 Yes No
5. Did you go out with your significant other on your 21st birthday?
 Yes No
6. How many alcoholic drinks* did you have on your 21st birthday?
*(*A drink is a bottle of beer, a glass of wine, a wine cooler, a shot glass of liquor or a mixed drink)*

None 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12+

7. Did you experience any of the following due to celebrating your 21st birthday?
 (If you did not use alcohol skip to question 9)

	Yes	No
Had a hangover	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vomited	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drove a car while under the influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Had a memory loss (blackout)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did something I regretted later	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Been hurt or injured	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>		
Had unexpected or unplanned sexual activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Had unprotected sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>		

9. Not including your 21st birthday, how many alcoholic drinks did you have the last time you “partied”/socialized?

None 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12+

10. In your opinion, what percentage of FSU students had five or more drinks on their 21st birthday?

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%
100%

This project was administered and compiled by **Kathryn Voigt**, Research Associate in the Office of Vice-President for Student Affairs [644-1331] and **Chris Franzetti**, Partnership for Alcohol Responsibility [644-6489] at Florida State University.