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Key Elements of Problem Gambling Prevention Programs

Problem gambling doesn't receive much attention on many college campuses, but it should, say Oregon public health experts. As a result, the state's department of human services (DHS) has developed an initiative to help Oregon's colleges and universities create and implement problem gambling prevention efforts. *Student Affairs Leader* recently spoke with representatives of the DHS about the different elements that campuses can combine to create a problem gambling prevention effort that suits its community and needs.

The "why" behind the initiative

After conducting surveys, visiting campuses to give presentations, and reading research, the DHS became convinced that the partnership program should be created, says Jeffrey Marotta, problem gambling services manager with the DHS' Mental Health and Addiction Services.

"Students were overwhelmingly telling us that this is a really big issue and that people weren't looking at it," he says. "It's probably a larger issue today than it was just a few years ago."

Part of the increase in the problem is that it's easier for gamblers of all ages to participate. In Oregon, for example, there are more than 10,000 video gambling machines in restaurants and bars.

Online gambling sites and poker tournaments in particular market themselves heavily to students. (For example, a

University of Minnesota journalism senior won \$1 million in a Limit Hold'em PartyPoker.com Million V tournament held in March aboard a cruise ship. The winner went on the cruise for spring break and joined the tournament after his friends convinced him to play and pitched in for the \$10,500 entry fee.) In addition, there is a trend toward mobile gambling via cell phones.

About one in 20 college students has a problem with gambling, and a total of about 15 percent are considered "at risk" for developing a problem, Marotta says. "We know that the majority of people gamble without many negative consequences; however, for a small percentage of people, gambling becomes a serious problem."

The problem becomes an institutional concern when students leave school because of debt or use financial aid to fund their habits, Marotta says.

A menu of responses

In order to help Oregon campuses respond to this problem, the state DHS has created a menu of programming options from which the campuses can choose. Once the campuses select the options that are right for them, the DHS helps them implement those steps.

"We will go with as small or as big as they are willing to commit to," says Wendy Hausotter, public health and prevention coordinator for Oregon Problem Gambling. "Not every campus is going

to be interested in every approach. I'm sure [campuses] have a lot on their plate and that [problem gambling] is probably not on the top. But we're hoping to get a few campuses interested to start. I think the momentum will build from there."

One of the initiative's goals is to learn which program components are most attractive to colleges and universities in the first place, Hausotter says. "We are launching this and learning as we go."

Ultimately, the amount and kind of assistance the DHS offers to each campus depends on what the campus wants and what best suits its unique environment and needs. DHS staff can make presentations on campus, for example, or train campus constituents to make their own. The state is also offering each campus funding for a \$1,000 stipend that it can give to a student or student organization that wants to be an on-campus sponsor of activities.

"We would provide the materials and help them generate ideas, but the pro-

Survey your students and ask them how many are using financial aid to fund gambling.

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gram really would be theirs,” Hausotter says.

Recommended rollout

While Oregon campuses can select only the program components they'd like to try, Marotta and Hausotter say that an ideal rollout for a problem gambling prevention effort would include all of the following steps.

1) developing on-campus partnerships

Such partnerships might include the counseling center, psychology department, and student affairs office, Marotta says.

2) surveying students and sharing the results

Oregon campuses that partner with the DHS will use a survey produced by an outside vendor that collects the data and sends results to the campus as well as the state, Hausotter says. The survey asks students 22 questions about their gambling habits, whether they borrow money to gamble or pay debts, and whether they are familiar with on-campus treatment and assistance resources.

In addition, the survey asks, “By what

means can we most effectively communicate with you?” and gives a range of options, including email, presentations, websites, and on-campus displays, Hausotter says. “So not only would we have a sense of the extent of the problem on campus but also the best way from the students’ point of view to get them more information about or help with gambling if they need it,” she says.

Whether students are surveyed online or by paper and pencil in big lecture halls, the survey results “give us a little indication about what kind of problem we’re looking at,” Marotta says. The results—especially results about any financial aid dollars going towards gambling—tend to get the administration’s attention, he says. Survey results can also be published in the student newspaper, which is another way of raising awareness, he says.

3) developing awareness and intervention programs

These programs could include peer educator training or a session during orientation, Marotta says. “Sometimes it can be just a small piece of a talk about risky behaviors,” he says.

Other awareness campaign components can include the following, Hausotter says:

- Fliers can be posted on campus or materials distributed to each student that address “basic-level awareness”—the signs of a gambling problem, where to get help, and the principles of responsible gambling.
- A campaign designed especially for National Problem Gambling Awareness Week (www.npgaw.org) offers tie-in to alternate resources.
- Presentations can be tailored to the needs of different campus constituencies. “We pretty much think [problem gambling] is not on any particular group’s radar screen, so a campus might want us to do presentations for faculty or administrators or resident assistants or athletic staff or the general student population,” Hausotter says.

- An interactive awareness website for students can provide links to on-campus resources and allow students with concerns to answer questions on their own.
- Curriculum tools can help instructors make a discussion of problem gambling part of a course. For example, an ethics course could discuss whether states should offer a lottery.
- Staff and student training is essential. Hausotter says the state is assuming that the primary sponsors on campus will be the student counseling or health center, but sponsors could also include the financial aid, student affairs, or athletics departments, or the student council.

4) formulating a policy response

Almost all schools across the country have drug and alcohol policies, but only 25 percent have any kind of gambling policies, Marotta says. He acknowledges, however, that most campuses aren’t interested in enacting zero-tolerance policies, given that gambling is not harmful to most students.

“So I think we’ll have to be reasonable about what’s actually doable on a campus, what’s enforceable,” he says.

He suggests starting with a look at Internet gambling, because that’s marketed very heavily to college students. Institutional policy responses might include blocking out Internet gambling sites from campus networks. “Most college campuses have no restrictions on [online gambling], so we think that that’s one place where it would make a statement,” Marotta says. “It doesn’t preclude what people do on their own equipment, but the campus doesn’t have to be involved in helping someone go down that trail.”

The most important part of the prevention effort, however, is simply getting started, Hausotter says. “If a campus wants just one of the components, we’re willing to start there with them,” she says. “One component is better than nothing, which is what I think most campuses have right now.” ●

Additional Resources

Gambling on Campus: New Directions for Student Services No. 113 is a new paperback offering information about campus gambling, as well as suggestions for research, frameworks for policy development, and models for practice. Information on ordering (\$27) is available through www.josseybass.com.

Studentaffairs.com will host the online course *Check, Bet, or Raise: Are You Prepared to Deal with Campus Gambling?*, presented by George S. McClellan, vice president for student development at Dickinson State University, from June 28 to July 12. Information on registering (\$130) is available at www.studentaffairs.com. ●

On-Campus

Report

C A P S U L E S

A student government resolution to increase the number of gender-neutral restrooms at **Oregon State University** failed 11 to 18. Student senators voting against the resolution said they were concerned about a lack of cost estimates for the project.

Three **Ocean County College** students are suing the New Jersey college, claiming that it violated their free speech and press rights. College trustees removed the student newspaper's long-time faculty advisor in December 2005. Student journalists say the removal was prompted by a series of articles criticizing the administration.

Southwest Baptist University sent the most students of any American college or university on missions within the United States in 2005, according to the Southern Baptist Convention's North American Mission Board.

Name changes: **Albuquerque Technical Vocational Institute** (TVI) will become **Central New Mexico Community College**. TVI voted on the name change because it serves central New Mexico, not just Albuquerque, via its multiple campuses. In addition, students transferring to four-year institutions expressed concern that those institutions would not recognize TVI as an accredited institution. Students at **University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee** voted in a nonbinding referendum to keep the institution's name as it is. Some campus community members say the hyphen in the current name relegates the institution to second-class status within the University of Wisconsin system. Rejected name suggestions included Wisconsin State University, the

University of Milwaukee, and Milwaukee State University. Ten students wrote in "Jedi Academy" as a suggestion.

Students at the **University of Texas** at Austin and other campuses are asking class-ring makers to abide by a set of jeweler's "Golden Rules." The rules include pledges to treat workers fairly and to minimize the environmental impact of gold mining and processing.

A debate on the purpose of **Valparaiso University's** escort vans prompted some student drivers to quit, although the campus hired new drivers to continue the service. Some administrators and students say the vans' primary purpose is to prevent crime by seeing students, especially women, home safely at night. Some students, however, say the vans also help prevent drunken driving by giving intoxicated students lifts home. The debate was intensified by a proposal to increase police officers' visibility on the vans to help curb disruptive behavior by intoxicated riders.

The creator of an online competition for **Seattle Pacific University's** (SPU's) "hottest" woman has taken the site down. In the "May Madness" competition, modeled after the NCAA's "March Madness" basketball tournament, visitors were asked to rate the attractiveness of 64 SPU students, most of whom say they did not consent to having their Facebook profiles and photos included in the contest. A public letter from SPU's president asked the competition's creator, a recent **University of Washington** graduate, to remove the site.

The parent of a 14-year-old student who has been admitted to the **University of**

Maine in Orono says the administration is making a mistake by not allowing her daughter to live in the university residence halls next year. The university says that given the student's age, it wouldn't be appropriate for her to live with traditional-age students.

Bad ideas: **Bowdoin College** security officers caught four freshmen breaking into a dining hall through a utility tunnel they entered at a construction site. The students were caught absconding with bagels and Lucky Charms cereal. Unknown students captured more than a dozen bats at a nearby state park and released them in a **University of Arkansas** residence hall room. Campus health officials are warning the students behind the incident that they might have exposed themselves to rabies. In addition, if the bats are part of a protected species, the students could be charged under federal and state law. The pool at **Milligan College** in Tennessee closed for repairs after about ten students dumped a large amount of Kool-Aid powder into the water. The Kool-Aid destroyed the pH balance of the 176,000-gallon pool and overtaxed and broke five filters.

University of Oklahoma students have mixed feelings about the 2006 class gift. It's a replica of an inscribed rock the class of 1906 gave to the university. While some students say the 2006 gift reflects the campus's history and growth, others say its location on a new part of campus doesn't mark a spot where the class of 2006 spent much time.

College students who illegally download and share files should take heed. Eighty-

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six percent of managers surveyed by *Business Week* magazine say they consider such acts unethical and a good reason to reject a job candidate.

A dean of students' office investigation at the **University of Arizona** in Tucson supports four students' claims that the former student body president sexually harassed them in the 2005–2006 academic year. The former president has maintained that the complaints were made to remove him from office.

According to an **Emory University** study, freshmen under the age of 20 at several Southeastern U.S. campuses were almost 70 percent more likely to test positive for chlamydia than students aged 20 to 24. The study included 789 students screened voluntarily for chlamydia at 10 colleges in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi.

Twelve former and current **Utah State University** students are suing the school, claiming that it violates the Americans with Disabilities Act by not providing enough sign-language interpreters and other resources for deaf students.

The **University of Michigan** law school has joined law schools at the **University of Virginia** and the **University of California, Los Angeles** in blocking students' access to wireless Internet while they're in class. Instructors say the students are surfing instead of paying attention.

Slippery Rock University social work students are participating in a silent protest to demand health insurance coverage parity for mental illness. The students' website at www.sruswforparity.com received about 500 visitors in its first two weeks.

A **University of South Florida** (USF) communications student received a new Hyundai in April for being a top achiever in the USF advertising class "Car Wars: Lessons from the Biggest Marketing Battlefield in the World." A local ad agency and a local car sales lot provided the prize.

Four years ago, **Cornell University** students created an "image committee" to help the university snag higher spots in national rankings. Now with about 50 members, the group's accomplishments include convincing the administration to get rid of a modern-looking logo in favor of a more staid version.

A gay student at **Wabash College** recently created and distributed T-shirts to each fraternity at the men's college in Indiana. The front of the shirt reads, "Why do gay men go to Wabash?" The back reads, "Plenty of closet space."

A **University of Alabama** marketing major recently won the National Collegiate Paper Rock Scissors Championship.

Seven **Portland State University** students met with the university president to protest the choice of graduation speaker, a U.S. Congress member from Oregon in favor of toughening laws regarding illegal immigrants.

An interracial Greek social held in April may have been the first such event at the **University of Alabama**, where fraternity and sorority membership has frequently been divided along racial and ethnic lines.

The **Arizona Students' Association**, which advocates for students attending all the state's public institutions, claims in a lawsuit that its former director embezzled nearly \$210,000

in organization funds. The executive director resigned in January.

Energy consumption by **Yale University's** residential colleges decreased 10 percent in the 2005–2006 academic year, exceeding the university's annual goal of 5 percent. The university's three-year goal is to reduce consumption by 15 percent.

A student film critic for the **University of Missouri at Kansas City's** campus newspaper quit his position and apologized after being accused of copying parts of his movie reviews from an online movie review website.

Texas Christian University in Fort Worth will no longer print and distribute paper application forms to rising seniors in high school. The institution believes it will become the first in Texas to move to an entirely electronic application process. **The University of Dayton** in Ohio and **California Polytechnic State University** are among the handful of other institutions nationally that have moved to a wholly electronic process.

Iowa State University and the Ames, Iowa, police departments partnered in a spring campaign to improve officers' relationships with students living off campus. As part of the "Frank the Flamingo" campaign, officers distributed flamingo-themed T-shirts, key chains, and other items to "lighten the mood" when responding to complaints about loud parties. In addition to distributing the items, police explained to hosts and guests how they could correct the noise problem and thus continue the party while staying within the law. Focus groups helped choose the flamingo mascot. ●

Resource Guide Helps Faculty Help First-Year Students

Recognizing that faculty members who teach first-year students play a crucial role in student success, Illinois State University has developed a resource guide for faculty teaching first-year students, a brief online document intended to raise awareness of the importance of the first-year experience, inform faculty of support services available on campus, and enhance the importance and prestige of teaching first-year students.

The guide, developed by the university's Council for the First-Year Experience, includes the following:

- an overview of the university's participation in the Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year Project
- a timeline of first-year experience events and programs
- a first-year curriculum update
- information about working with the millennial generation, including case studies
- information about support services (arranged by topic).

The guide's goal is to provide faculty with the information they need in an easily accessible format—a 17-page PDF document with hyperlinks.

"Having it in electronic format saves money on printing and makes it much easier to update," says Danielle Lindsey,

special projects coordinator in the provost's office.

Although the guide was designed specifically for faculty members who teach first-year students, it goes out to all faculty members through the provost's office via email.

The email message about the guide recommends that faculty download the guide directly to their desktops to make it easy to access.

"Faculty are often the first people to sense that students are going down the wrong path, that they're struggling. A lot of times, things going on outside the classroom affect students but the faculty member can help them get connected with support services that can assist them," Lindsey says.

The guide has been "pretty enlightening" to the faculty, Lindsey says. "In general, the faculty who [worked with the First-Year Experience Task Force] were more in tune with the holistic approach to working with students and the support services available to students than other [faculty members], but we really did hear from them that faculty need to be reminded that we do have these services and that these opportunities are available," Lindsey says.

A timeline within the guide informs faculty of the first-year experience events and programs that students participate in,

including those that occur before they come to campus. "We tell [the faculty] what we are talking with students about and provide them with the general rhythm of the academic year and the types of things that students might be experiencing," Lindsey says.

"I don't think we expect faculty to be the people who are going to counsel students, but we hope that faculty will pay attention to some behaviors and signals that might alert them to some problems, and interview [the students] and get [them] the help they need," Lindsey says.

Developing a similar guide at other institutions should involve input from all over campus, including residence life, the dean of students, academic affairs, cocurriculum staff, teaching and learning center staff, and counseling services.

The resource guide is available at www.provost.ilstu.edu/downloads/fye/FYE_ResourceGuide05_06.pdf. ●



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Benchmarking Your Efforts to Help Students Develop Morally

Spirituality and morality is important to most college students, recent surveys say. For example, Spirituality in Higher Education, a research project conducted by the University of California, Los Angeles' Higher Education Research Institute, found that of more than 112,000 first-year students surveyed, nearly half said that they consider seeking out opportunities to help them grow spiritually to be "essential" or "very important." The study also found that

- 80 percent said they have an interest in spirituality;
- 76 percent said they search for a meaning or purpose in life;
- 74 percent have discussions with friends about the meaning of life.

How well is your campus helping students develop spiritually, morally, and ethically? Here's a tool to get the discussion started.

The "Inventory for Assessing the Spiritual Growth Initiatives of Colleges and Universities" was developed by the Hardee Center for Leadership and Ethnicity in Higher Education at Florida State University.

The two-page instrument helps campuses benchmark their commitment to student spiritual and character growth. The instrument does not, however, assess effectiveness of a particular program, says David Eberhardt, who conducts graduate research at Hardee Center.

Several years ago, center director John Dalton developed the tool by observing what campuses with high levels of commitment to student spiritual growth were doing. The assessment asks users to rate on a scale of 0 to 4 how fully and well their campuses are implementing efforts within the following 10 principles of spiritual growth:

- 1) making a deliberate, comprehensive effort to communicate its core values to campus constituents
- 2) modeling its mission and core values through leadership and administrative operations
- 3) integrating its mission and core values in its academic programs
- 4) translating its vision and values into conduct and citizenship guidelines
- 5) promoting public dialogue about its values and mission
- 6) taking deliberate steps to help students examine and act upon the institution's values and mission
- 7) promoting a "purposeful, caring, and inclusive" campus
- 8) committing to students' holistic learning and development
- 9) assessing its efforts to strengthen students' spiritual growth
- 10) honoring "achievements of moral and civic character"

Each of these ten principles is divided into more specific benchmarks.

Practitioners can use the instrument to get a sense of what other campuses are doing and see how their campuses compare, Eberhardt says.

"This is something that a group of administrators sitting around a table might do on their own and then talk about," Eberhardt says. "We encourage institutions to use it as a team, as a student affairs committee, or as a larger committee."

The Hardee Center's inventory can be used without charge or permission. To access it, go to www.collegevalues.org, click on "Resources/Links," and scroll down to and click on "Principles and Practices for Promoting Character Development in College."

Information on the center's Journal of College and Character is also available at www.collegevalues.org.

More on UCLA's Spirituality in Higher Education project is available at www.spirituality.ucla.edu. ●

Resources

Inspiration and Lessons in Student Affairs

Stories of Inspiration: Lessons and Laughter in Student Affairs is a collection of 46 personal accounts of student affairs educators' on-the-job experiences. Edited by Sarah M. Marshall, the book offers professional inspiration and lessons in a *Chicken Soup for the Soul* style. Information on ordering (\$27) is available through www.naspa.org.

First-Year Common Reading Programs

Common Reading Programs: Going Beyond the Book is a new monograph from the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. The 110-page monograph by Jodi Levine Laufgraben examines strategies for planning, implementing, and assessing dynamic, successful first-year reading initiatives. Information on ordering (\$35) is available through www.sc.edu/fye/index.html.

Campus Sexual Harassment Report

Nearly two-thirds of all college students experience sexual harassment, according to *Drawing the Line: Sexual Harassment on Campus*, a new research report from the American Association of University Women (AAUW). The AAUW report, based on findings from a spring 2005 national survey of undergraduates, also notes that nearly one-third of students experience sexual harassment in their first year. The report is available at www.aauw.org/research/dtl.cfm. ●