

Student Government Association
Proposal to Change Messiah College Alcohol Policy

FR 04:23

Whereas, Messiah College's current alcohol policy needs to be clarified so as to reduce the current levels of confusion surrounding its meaning,

Whereas, the zero-tolerance nature of the current alcohol policy as stated in the Student Handbook (p. 95) makes it difficult for the college community to openly discuss issues related to alcohol and its consumption,

Whereas, changing the alcohol policy in such a way as stated below will better enable members of the college community to openly educate one another about what it means to drink responsibly and the dangers of drunkenness,

Whereas, the results of alcohol policy telephone survey conducted by SGA last November (734 students interviewed) warranted further investigation of a potential policy change due to the varied responses of the surveyed students,

Whereas, the overwhelming majority of students at the SGA-sponsored Alternate Chapel (March 11, 2003) on Messiah's alcohol policy desired to change the policy so as to permit students who are 21 years or older to drink responsibly off campus,

Whereas, this high level of student support justified taking this matter further,

Whereas, the week long student referendum on the alcohol policy, which ran from March 31st-April 4th, resulted in a vote of 816 students (66%) in favor of the above change to the alcohol policy and 422 students (34%) opposed to the specified change,

Whereas, it is the direct responsibility of the Student Forum to adequately address students' concerns,

"Therefore, be it resolved that we, the 2002-03 Student Forum, as representatives of the student body at Messiah College, hereby recommend that the Messiah College Administration adopt an alcohol policy that corresponds to the following characteristics:

- **No Messiah College student will be permitted to consume or possess alcohol while on Messiah College property or in Messiah College housing. This same standard will also apply to students on property that may be reasonably considered adjacent to college property or college housing.**
- **No Messiah College student will be permitted to consume or possess alcohol while at a college-sponsored event or function, except for students of legal age who study abroad or engage in a cross-cultural trip over J-term or May-term (the legal drinking age will be determined by the laws of the land – see below).**
- **As long as the above restrictions do not apply, all Messiah College students will be expected to follow the laws of the land with regards to alcohol, whether that is here in the United States or in another nation (*Ex: Messiah College students, who are 21 years or older, are permitted to responsibly consume and possess alcohol in the Unites States – assuming that none of the previously stated restrictions are applicable.*)**

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- **Drunkenness is to be strictly forbidden and all students will be expected to represent their college and their faith in a positive light at all times and in all situations.**

This student-initiated proposal is not to be interpreted as a means of encouraging students to consume or possess alcohol; rather it recognizes that there is no biblical mandate for abstinence when it comes to this particular matter. SGA believes that it is very important for members of the Messiah College community to be pro-active in educating one another about the inherent dangers and risks that are associated with alcohol. We, the Student Forum, strongly encourage the Messiah College Administration to do everything in its power to actualize this ideal.

We, the Student Forum, would like to see the Messiah College Administration begin considering the above changes at the start of the Fall 2003 semester. Regardless of the outcome, The Student Forum respectfully requests a written rationale of any decision made by the Administration. If and when a new policy is enacted, it should be implement on a one-year trial basis with a comprehensive evaluation to be conducted at the culmination of this one-year period. Furthermore, we also recommend that the Administration review its alcohol policy with respect to college employees in lieu of the spirit of this SGA proposal that speaks to the student body.”

Respectfully submitted,
Jason Hobbes & Adam Richard
Naugle Representatives
22 April 2003