Texas A&M University is an educational institution dedicated to the pursuit of excellence, the promotion of academic achievement and the advancement of knowledge. Because of the university’s interest in the intellectual, physical and psychological well-being of the campus community, it is important that the university take steps to curtail the abusive or illegal use of alcoholic beverages. Thus, educating students about the effects of misuse and use of alcohol will help accomplish these interests and goals.

Texas A&M’s Student Rules specify how alcohol can play a part in student organization activities or event. However, as with rules or policies, it is not unusual for there to be questions or interpretation differences that need clarification by advisors or administrators. This document is intended to provide general information to TAMU student leaders and their organizations. It is for reference only and is not intended to provide specific advice regarding specific types of events. Specific advice regarding an individual person or situation should be requested from your advisor, the Director of Student Activities or Dean of Student Life.

Student leaders should always keep in mind that the use of alcoholic beverages by members of the Texas A&M University community is at all times subject to the alcoholic beverage laws of the State of Texas. As such, it is the University’s expectation that student leaders be responsible event planners and considers all of the rules, policies, and or issues before putting those event plans into action.
COMMON QUESTIONS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS

There are typically three TAMU Student Rules that are most misunderstood: Open Events, Co-Sponsorship, and BYOB operations (sections A, C, & E). As such, we have developed a checklist (see attached on pages 3-4) for your event planning team to use when organizing an event where alcohol is given away, sold, or otherwise provided to those present. We also realize that many of you probably have lots of questions when it comes to risk management at social events, particularly those that include alcohol. As such, we have attempted to provide some clarification and understanding as to why the rules are in place.

Why can't we have open events where alcohol is present?
The first point to consider is "would you invite all of Bryan/College Station to a party at your apartment?" Chances are that you probably would not. The same decision making process should true for events hosted by your organization.

For some unexplainable reason, the choices that people make when they are drinking are not usually the same as the choices that they make when they are sober. As a result, fights, sexual assaults, car accidents, property damage, etc. are more likely to occur when guests have been drinking. As a party host it is much easier for you to talk to a friend who has been drinking and try to calm that individual down, than it is for you to talk to a stranger. Further, you, as a student leader and an organization, are responsible for the people who are at your event. If you invite people to your event, you want to invite people who have a vested interest in helping to preserve your organization.

What is the benefit to having a guest list?
1) You have an accurate count of the number of people planning to attend your event.
2) You can plan your event based off the number of people planning on attending your event.
3) It makes the event a “closed event.”
4) If something unfortunate (fight, sexual assault, accident) were to happen at your event, you have record of who was in attendance. This can be helpful for a number of reasons such as:
   a. If those involved in the incident were an A&M student, it may be possible to assist them (in the case of an injury) or hold them responsible as an individual for their behavior; and/or
   b. Records would be of assistance to an investigating agency regarding responsibility and accountability.

Are sign-in lists a good idea?
A sign-in list is not a true guest list. An individual can sign-in under anyone's name. It also appears that the event is open to the general public.

Can the location let anyone into our event?
No. If the location is letting regular customers into your event, it becomes an open event. If you cannot afford the cost to rent the facility for the exclusive use by your members and guests, see if the venue will allow you to rent out a portion of the facility (i.e. a special party room or wing). Some venues (restaurants or clubs) will rent out their porch, back room, etc. for a reduced cost.

How do we enforce a guest list?
Hiring a security officer is the best way to monitor a guest list. It is challenging for members to turn away friends, alumni, etc. that are not on the pre-determined guest list. Use a hand stamp to designate party guests and wristband for those guests that are of legal drinking age.

Why can't we advertise alcohol or co-sponsor an event with a alcohol distributor or tavern/bar?
By advertising alcohol at your event, or co-sponsoring it with an alcohol distributor/tavern it may be perceived that your organization is encouraging people to consume alcohol (specifically students). While the values and goals of Texas A&M student organizations vary from one to another, as a University and as student organizations affiliated with Texas A&M alcohol consumption (especially consumption by under aged individuals) is not condoned as one of those values. Texas A&M University is an educational institution dedicated to the pursuit of excellence, the promotion of academic achievement and the advancement of knowledge. Because of the university’s interest in the intellectual, physical and psychological well-being of the campus community, it is important that the university and recognized student organizations take steps to curtail the abusive or illegal use of alcoholic beverages.
I. IS THIS EVENT A CO-SPONSORED EVENT?
If the student organization event will be held at a venue or location owned by a vendor of alcoholic beverages, distributor, organization, or tavern (tavern defined as an establishment generating more than half of the annual gross sales from alcohol) where alcohol is given away, sold, or otherwise provided to those present -- please answer the following questions:

1. Is there an agreement (written or verbal) with the venue, vendor, distributor, organization, or tavern regarding the event such as, but not limited to:
   a. Discounted rental fee for the venue in exchange for anything provided by the student organization (i.e. advertisement, percentage of ticket sales, etc.)
   b. Advertisement of the venue, vendor name, or tavern in any capacity other than the location for the event
   c. Contribution to a charity, fundraiser or the student organization from sales of food, beverage, etc.

2. Is the venue, vendor, distributor, organization or tavern advertising the event as their own or as an event that they are co-sponsoring with the student organization or others?

3. Is the venue, vendor, distributor, organization or tavern paying for any aspect of the event?

4. Is there a perception (on campus or of invitees) that the venue, vendor, distributor, organization or tavern is co-sponsoring the event?

If you have answered YES to any of these questions then there is a high likelihood that the event could be considered a CO-SPONSORED EVENT and thus a possible violation of TAMU Student Rules regarding Recognized Student Organizations - Sponsored Events Involving Alcoholic Beverages.

II. IS THIS EVENT A CLOSED EVENT?
If the student organization event is hosting a closed event which includes beverage service in which alcohol is given away, sold, or otherwise provided to those present -- please answer the following questions:

1. Members of the organization are issuing an unlimited number of invitations to the general public or campus community?

2. An invitation/guest list has not been generated nor will one be present at the entrance or checked when guests arrive at the event?

3. The venue will be open to the general public during the event?

4. If tickets are being sold:
   a. There are an un-limited number of tickets being sold?
   b. Venues (i.e. ticket office, tavern) other than members of the organization are selling tickets to the event?
   c. Tickets are being sold to the general public not specific individuals or groups?
   d. Names, addresses, and other identifiable information of those purchasing tickets have NOT been or will NOT be collected by the student organization?
   e. Attendees presenting tickets – will NOT be checked against the list of ticketed guests prior to entry into the event?

5. The event is being advertised to the general public or is there an appearance that the event is open to the general public?

If you have answered YES to any of these questions then there is a high likelihood that the event would be considered an OPEN EVENT and thus a violation of TAMU Student Rules regarding Recognized Student Organizations - Sponsored Events Involving Alcoholic Beverages.
III. HAVE YOU EFFECTIVELY PLANNED A BYOB EVENT?
If the student organization event is hosting a BYOB event which includes beverage service in which alcohol will be present -- please check the following questions:

1) Guests (21 years old or over) are only allowed to bring a limited quantity of alcohol for use by themselves (i.e. 6 beers/person)?
   YES or NO

2) Guests (21 years old or over) are limited to a specific type of alcoholic beverage (i.e. no hard liquor or unknown punch mixtures, no glass bottles)?
   YES or NO

3) Guests are provided a ticket for each single container of alcoholic beverage that they bring to the event.
   YES or NO

4) Guests (21 years old or over) are issued wristbands identifying themselves as of age.
   YES or NO

5) Alcoholic beverages (brought by guests) is maintained in a secure environment with a designated server over 21 years of age.
   YES or NO

6) Alcoholic beverages are redistributed to only those guests who have proper identification (wristband) AND a ticket.
   YES or NO

7) Alcohol is not accessible to guests who are under 21 years of age.
   YES or NO

8) FREE non-alcoholic beverages and non-salty food are available to all guests
   YES or NO

If you have answered YES to ALL of these questions then there is a high likelihood that the event would be considered an BYOB EVENT and thus in compliance with TAMU Student Rules regarding Recognized Student Organizations - Sponsored Events Involving Alcoholic Beverages.

Other Solutions for Minimizing Your Risk
(Information adapted from FIPG, Inc.)

× Plan ahead, don’t start making arrangements for your function an hour before it is going to happen
× Plan using the worst-case scenario (fights, underage drinking, people arriving intoxicated, date rape drugs, etc.). Come up with a plan to minimize these risks.
× Assign members of your organization to plan activities, encourage them to be critical of events (have them brainstorm about worst case scenarios and identify ways to reduce risks)
× Have a third party vendor be responsible for alcohol distribution and carding OR utilize a Bring Your Own Beverage system (Never pay for alcohol with organization funds, a pass that hat situation, etc.)
× Limit attendance to members and their guests… don’t open it up to the public. A random person off the street has no responsibility to you or your organization.
× Limit the number of guests that you invite. Can you reasonably be responsible for fifty of your closest friends? Restrict access to 2-3 guests per member.
× Have designated members stay sober. It is their job to mix and mingle, while making sure that the function is running smoothly.
× Provide free non-salty food items and free non-alcoholic beverages for guests.
× Post the numbers of Taxicabs, police officers, hotels, CarPool, etc.
× Have an activity or theme for your function. Make sure there is something to do other than drink.
× Have a starting time and an ending time for the event. Stick to it.
× After the event, meet with your executive officers or a risk management committee to figure out what went well and what could be improved.
× Don’t charge money at the door if alcohol is included in the fee, or if indirectly people will receive alcohol as a result of the money. (Purchase a cup, get free beer)

The University wants student organizations to prosper… we want you to be safe... and we would rather talk to student leaders in advance, before a problem happens, than after a problem has taken place. Take advantage of University resources if you have questions! We are here for you.
Recognized Student Organizations - Sponsored Events Involving Alcoholic Beverages.

It is expected that all student organizations will have their activities (sponsored, authorized, sanctioned, and/or financed) approved by the group's faculty/staff advisor. The student organization is responsible for assuring that alcohol consumption does not detrimentally affect the health and well-being of those attending the event. Recognized student organizations may hold events involving alcoholic beverages under the following conditions:

A. The possession, sale, use or consumption of alcoholic beverages, in public areas of the campus is prohibited. Any situation sponsored, authorized, sanctioned, endorsed, and/or financed by an undergraduate student organization must be in compliance with any and all applicable laws and rules of the state, county, city, and Texas A&M University, and must comply with either BYOB or third party vendor guidelines. In addition, the event or activity must be approved by the group's faculty/staff advisor.

B. No alcoholic beverage may be purchased through an undergraduate organization's funds, nor may the purchase of alcohol for members or guests be undertaken or coordinated by any member in the name of, or on behalf of, the undergraduate organization. The purchase or use of bulk quantity or common sources of such alcoholic beverage (i.e. kegs or cases) shall be prohibited.

C. Open events, meaning those with unrestricted access to non-members of the undergraduate organization, without specific invitation, where alcohol is present, shall be prohibited.

D. No members, collectively or individually shall purchase for, serve to, or sell alcoholic beverages to any minor (i.e. those under legal drinking age).

E. No organization may enter into an agreement to co-sponsor an event with an alcohol distributor, charitable organization or tavern (tavern defined as an establishment generating more than half of the annual gross sales from alcohol) where alcohol is given away, sold, or otherwise provided to those present.

F. No organization may co-sponsor or co-finance a function where alcohol is purchased by any of the host organizations or groups.

G. All membership recruitment activities associated with any student organization shall be alcohol free.

H. No alcohol shall be present at any new member activity of the organization.

I. The organization or organizations must establish precautionary measures to ensure that alcoholic beverages are not served to persons under the legal drinking age or to persons who appear to be intoxicated.

J. No event shall include any form of "drinking contest" or encourage the rapid consumption of alcohol in the activity or its promotion.

K. Non-alcoholic beverages and non-salty food must be available at the same place as the alcoholic beverages. Food and non-alcoholic beverages must be featured as prominently as the alcoholic beverages.

L. University Advertisement Rules Regarding Student Organization-Sponsored Events with Alcoholic Beverages.

Advertising of university events where alcoholic beverages will be consumed must be consistent with the educational philosophy of Texas A&M University and follow these conditions:

1. Advertisement for any university event where alcoholic beverages are being served must note the availability of non-alcoholic beverages and food as prominently as the alcoholic beverages.

2. The messages conveyed in the promotion of any event must not encourage any form of misuse of alcohol.

3. Publicity must not convey that consumption of alcohol is the purpose or reason for the event.

4. Promotion must not refer to the amount/quantity of alcohol (5-keg party, etc.).

5. Advertisements for events must not portray drinking as a solution to personal or academic problems nor as necessary to social, sexual or academic success.

6. Alcoholic beverages must not be provided as awards, door prizes, or giveaways to individuals or campus organizations.

For more information about TAMU Student Rules go to

STUDENT-RULES.TAMU.EDU