

## Effects of Alcohol Consumption on Academic Performance

There is little doubt that alcohol can have a negative effect on academic success.

One national study indicates that college students with an “A” average consume an average of only 3.3 drinks per week, while “D” students consume an average of 9 drinks per week.

### Some Sobering Facts...

- Alcohol has been linked to 40% of incidents of lowered academic performance.
- 25% of college dropouts are for alcohol-related reasons.
- The heaviest drinkers make the lowest grades.
- Increases in average number of drinks per week are related to decreased class attendance and getting behind on school work.

### Alcohol Use and Academic Performance at Virginia Tech...

- Most VT students do not allow their alcohol use to interfere with their academic performance.
- A 2005 study indicated that 78% did not miss any classes as a result of their alcohol consumption.
- In addition, GPA was negatively correlated with increased drinking frequency.

### Short-Term Effects of Intoxication...

Drinking to intoxication reduces REM sleep, which impairs memory and concentration for up to 72 hours:

- **Sleep:** Intoxication inhibits REM sleep, a stage of sleep associated with learning and memory functions. REM deprivation has been linked with learning impairment.
- **Memory:** Alcohol impairs memory by inhibiting the transfer and consolidation of information into long-term memory.
- **Concentration:** Perhaps most importantly, your attention span is shorter for periods up to three days following intoxication, resulting in poor note taking, decreased reading speed and reading comprehension, less efficient studying, and poor abstract thinking.

**Campus Alcohol Abuse Prevention Center**

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