

## CAMPUS COUNCIL PEER EXCHANGE HIGHLIGHTS

May 29, 2024

### Topic: Odor Policies and Cannabis Enforcement Strategies

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**Molly Mitchell** shared 2024 MD-CAS data on cannabis odor indicating:

- 1 in 4 students report being sick due to the odor from others' cannabis use.
- Students commented, unsolicited, about how ubiquitous cannabis odor is on their campus.
- 61 percent of students (strongly agree/agree) support a campus odor policy.

**Dr. Ina Ramos** and her colleagues at Bowie State University (BSU) shared their noxious odor policy and experience with implementation and enforcement. The policy gives faculty leverage to address odor issues in the classroom:

- *A noxious odor is any fragrance or aroma that has such intensity that it can become apparent and disruptive to those around. This may become noxious when the smell emanates too strongly. (e.g., cigarette, marijuana, cigar or pipe, perfume, air fresher or large amounts of dirty laundry).*

**Reporting** can be done on-line, by email, or in-person, but must be written. The report must be very clear about what the odor is and where it is occurring.

#### Administrative Conduct Process

- The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards receives an incident report and determines course of action depending on severity of incident/violation.
- For cases that are not severe enough to result in separation from the university, the student would begin the administrative conduct conference process where an administrator would adjudicate the findings with possible sanctions if found responsible (appeal process would also be explained).
- If the case is severe enough to consider separation from the university, then the student conduct panel process would begin. They would make the decision and administer the sanctions, which could include suspension or expulsion if they are found responsible.

#### Lessons Learned

- Conduct outreach to the campus community, including the faculty.
- Offer information sessions to faculty and encourage faculty to promote policy at the start of class and put policy in syllabus.
- Provide faculty with examples of dialect with students.
- Train residence life staff on how to report incidences of noxious odors.
- Allow the students to report if there are odors in their rooms or halls.

#### Challenges

- Getting buy-in from campus police on documenting incidents.



- Locating the specific area and room where the odor is coming from.
- Lack of evidence if paraphernalia is not present.

**Chief David Mitchell**, Director of Public Safety and Chief of Police for the University of Maryland, shared UMD's enforcement approach, and had recommendations for campuses whose security officers are not sworn officers and cannot confiscate and destroy cannabis found on campus:

- Private security can take an [80-hour training](#) to become special officers.
- Colleges can ask to enter into a cooperative agreement with local police, wherein they can pass the cannabis to that Department for disposal.

#### **Discussion: Bowie State University's Noxious Odor Policy**

- At BSU, commuter students who come to class with a noxious odor are sent to the ATOD center where they engage in an M.I. type of discussion. They don't give them probation. There aren't many commuter students with this violation.
- Bowie's ATOD Center:
  - Begins with motivational interviewing. They talk about the referral and about their use.
  - Uses the TAPS program (Tobacco, Alcohol, Prescription medication, and other Substance use Tool (TAPS) <https://nida.nih.gov/taps2/>) to quickly assess the student's risk level for developing dependence on any substance.
  - Conducts a substance use log (look back 14 days) to determine use and how much money they are spending and any negative outcomes.
- Third Millennium has software that they can use.
- For students who may have greater needs they make referrals through Charlie Health <https://www.charliehealth.com/how-it-works> , and Recovery Centers of America <https://recoverycentersofamerica.com/> .
- Students have felt more comfortable reporting violations this year.
- They haven't adjudicated any cases where noxious odors alone have resulted in separation from the University. There are very few repeat offenses (4 last year; 3 this year).
- There are no fines for violating the noxious odor policy unless there is an accompanying offense (e.g., they have covered the smoke detector).
- If a student says that they were not smoking, and the odor on them is a result of someone else's smoking, they still hold them responsible.
- Their current policy is being revised to cover all employees.

Some expressed concern that an odor policy would lead to an increased use of edibles. Odor policies can reduce harms to other students who are not using cannabis and can change the perceived norm of cannabis use on campus. Policy enforcement and education can address the risks of edibles at the same time.