Health Risks:
Virginia State University is dedicated to the education of students and employees about health risks associated with the abuse of alcohol and other drugs. Descriptions of some of these health risks are described below. In addition, behavioral difficulties at work, in school, or in relationships and with the law can be linked to the abuse of alcohol and other drugs.

Alcohol, a potentially addictive drug with significant physical and psychological consequences, is a central nervous system depressant that causes a number of marked changes in behavior.

- Low level doses of alcohol can impair judgment, decision-making, and the coordination required to drive a car safely, placing the driver and others at risk of injury.
- At higher levels, alcohol impairs the functioning of vital organs and can result in coma or death.
- Low to moderate doses increase the incidence of aggressive acts of violence.
- Moderate to high doses cause marked impairments in higher mental functions, severely altering a person’s ability to learn and remember information.
- Very high doses can cause respiratory depression and death. If combined with other depressants, much lower doses of alcohol can produce the effects just described.
- Repeated use of alcohol can lead to dependence. Sudden interruption of alcohol intake can produce withdrawal symptoms, including severe anxiety, tremors, hallucinations, and convulsions. Alcohol withdrawal can be life threatening.
- Prolonged and excessive use of alcohol, especially when combined with poor nutrition, can cause progressive damage to vital organs.
- Pregnant women who drink alcohol risk giving birth to infants having fetal alcohol syndrome.

Marijuana, is an illegal drug that impairs memory, perception, judgment and hand-eye coordination skills. The tar content in cannabis is at least 50% higher than that of tobacco and thus smokers run the added risk of lung cancer, chronic bronchitis, and other lung diseases. Recent findings in the medical community suggest that an "Amotivational syndrome" effects moderate to chronic users producing symptoms such as loss of energy, motivation, and concentration; inability to carry out long-term plans; and decreased performance in school and work. This finding has significant implications for students and institutions of higher learning.

In Summary:
Policy: Virginia State University prohibits the use, possession, distribution or selling of alcohol or illicit drugs anywhere on campus. The policy exists to comply with federal, state and local laws and to preserve an environment conducive to learning.

Sanctions: Students who violate the Alcohol and Drug Policy are subject to disciplinary action by the University judicial system that can range from probation to expulsion. A student can also be prosecuted under state and federal statutes.

Health Risks: Alcohol and other drugs can cause serious health related problems and contribute to engaging in high risk behaviors such as driving under the influence.

Resources for Prevention, Treatment and Assistance:
The University has established the Substance Abuse and Sexual Assault Prevention Program to offer educational and risk reduction programming and to provide treatment and/or assistance to students with substance abuse related problems/issues.

Substance Abuse & Sexual Assault Prevention
University Counseling Center
Virginia State University
409 Memorial Hall
524-5939

http://www.vsu.edu/pages/322.asp
**Alcohol and Drug Policy**

**Philosophy**

Virginia State University, a community of students, faculty, and staff is committed to preserving a living and learning environment where individuals can safely and successfully complete their college career free from the negative impact and disruptive influence of alcohol and other drugs. Aware of certain risks associated with alcohol and other drug use, the University views substance abuse as an obstacle to the attainment of a student's educational goals and to the University's mission. The responsibility to create and maintain a culture less vulnerable to alcohol and other drug use and one that promotes responsible attitudes and lifestyles will be shared by all members of the University community.

Recognizing substance abuse as a prevalent social issue, Virginia State University accepts its role and responsibility in helping find solutions to this problem. The University will educate members of the University community about the serious consequences and health risks associated with alcohol and other drug use. The University will help dispel faulty beliefs that suggest alcohol abuse and drug use are acceptable on a college campus.

**Help a friend - Save a Life**

**Policy**

The Virginia State University Alcohol and Drug Policy prohibits the possession, use, manufacture, distribution, selling or consumption of alcohol and illicit drugs anywhere on campus. The Policy pertains to the activities of all students on University property, and the activities of students at University sponsored events or at off-campus activities while representing the University community. Students, faculty and staff are expected to comply with all state, federal, and local alcohol and drug related laws.

VSU complies with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and expects staff and academic members of the University community to respond to the use of alcohol and other drugs in a responsible manner that includes but is not limited to:

1. Knowing and abiding by University Alcohol and Drug Policy.
2. Becoming informed about the consequences and risks associated with the use of alcohol and other drugs.
3. Supporting norms that convey the non-use of alcohol and other drugs as a responsible choice.
4. Being alert and responsive to the needs of persons who experience problems due to the irresponsible use of alcohol and other drugs, by helping persons identify and seek appropriate sources for assistance.
5. Integrating alcohol and other drug related information into topics of discussion as deemed appropriate.
6. Following procedures and enforcing sanctions established to hold persons accountable for their actions and encouraging compliance with regulations.

**Virginia Drinking Age Laws:**

Virginia's Alcohol Beverage Control Act contains laws governing possession, use and consumption of alcoholic beverages. Pertinent laws are summarized below:

- It is illegal for anyone under age 21 to purchase, possess, or consume any alcoholic beverage.
- It is illegal for any person to sell alcoholic beverages to persons under the age of 21 years.
- It is illegal for any person to purchase or provide alcoholic beverages for another when, at the time of the purchase, he/she knows or has reason to know that the person for whom the alcohol is purchased is under 21 years of age.
- It is illegal for any underage person to use a forged or otherwise deceptive driver's license to obtain beer or other alcoholic beverage.

**Controlled Substances and Illicit Drugs:**

It is illegal to manufacture, sell, give, distribute or possess with intent to manufacture, sell, give or distribute a controlled substance or illegal drug. It is illegal to possess or sell drug paraphernalia.

**Sanctions for Policy Violations**

Any member of the campus community who violates the university Alcohol and Drug Policy will face appropriate disciplinary action. Students in violation are subject to disciplinary action by the University judicial system or criminal prosecution by federal, state or local authorities or both. Violations of the University Alcohol and Drug Policy by students addressed through the Judicial Affairs System may be subject to but not limited to referral for assessment and/or treatment, community service, probation, suspension or expulsion. For additional information about violations and penalties, please consult the student handbook.