

Westmoreland County Community College

Biennial Review of the Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Program

Introduction

Purpose

Westmoreland County Community College (Westmoreland) conducted a biennial review of its alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention program, in compliance with the 1989 Amendments to the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act per Part 86 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) - the Drug Free Schools and Campuses Regulations, for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years.

The objectives of this report are to determine Westmoreland's AOD program effectiveness, the consistency of sanction enforcement, and to determine opportunities for improvement. Please note that both years in review were in the midst of a national pandemic thus many classes and events were held in a remote or online capacity.

Biennial Review Committee Members

The following Westmoreland County Community College employees serve on the Biennial Review Committee and assist in the compilation of this report:

- Sydney Beeler, Vice President of Enrollment Management
- Julie Greathouse, Director of Student Success
- Rob Velella , Student Life Coordinator
- Lauren Eicher, Counselor
- Jess Morrow, BSW

Background and Program Goals

Westmoreland County Community College is located in the southwest region of Pennsylvania, and in an area that is currently experiencing a crisis involving heroin and other prescription and illegal drugs (Westmoreland County Drug Overdose Task Force, 2017). The goals of the program include:

1. To educate our campus community about alcohol and other drugs through the development and dissemination of information and resources, including our Drug and Alcohol Policy.
2. To create and support a culture that promotes a healthy community.
3. To be a part of a community-wide response to drug and alcohol misuse, abuse, and addiction through referrals to in-patient and out-patient services, intervention programs, and other resources in the community that can provide on-going support for students.

Items Reviewed

The following items were examined for the biennial review:

- Westmoreland County Community College's Student Handbook
- Westmoreland County Community College's Annual Safety and Security Report
- Westmoreland County Community College's Employee Substance Abuse Policy
- Westmoreland County Community College's Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Westmoreland County Community College's Code of Student Conduct
- Westmoreland County Community College's Tobacco and Smoking Policy
- Westmoreland County Community College's website
- Westmoreland County Community College Counseling Services
- Westmoreland County Community College Student Life
- Westmoreland County Community College Prevention Committee
- Park Police of Westmoreland County

- Complying with The Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Regulations (EDGAR Part 86), A Guide for University and Campus Regulations prepared by the Higher Education Center
- The Higher Education Amendments of 1998, (P.L. 105-244) and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989, (P.L. 101-226)

Alcohol and Other Drug Program

AOD Program Events

The AOD program has changed in the past two years to take a more proactive and preventative approach in the college community. As previously mentioned, Westmoreland County and the surrounding areas are combating a drug, specifically opioid, epidemic in addition to a pandemic caused by the Coronavirus.. As such, an increase in preventative measures and outreach efforts are observed.

Counseling Services

Westmoreland County Community College counselors provide educational counseling to all current students. The college employs six full-time and seven part-time counselors, who are available to students across various college locations. All are Master's level counselors with background experience, training, and education in substance abuse counseling. Additionally, in the 2021-2022 academic year, the College hired a part time mental health counselor and a part time social worker to assist students in need. Further still, the College partners with several resources for drug and alcohol prevention, including but not limited to:

- Westmoreland County Crisis Hotline: 1-800-836-6010 or 724-547-0285 (T.T.Y. 1-800-799-4TTY)
- Blackburn Center against Domestic and Sexual Violence: 1-888-832-2272 (24 Hrs.)
- National Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK
- Alcoholics Anonymous: 1-866-851-8459

- Mental Health America of Westmoreland County: 724-834-6351 (Support Groups & Psychological/Psychiatric Counseling Services)
- Family Services of Western Pennsylvania: 1-888-222-4200 (Emotional, Drug or Alcohol Problems – Mental Illness – Crisis)
- 24-Hour CRISIS HOTLINE 724-335-6242
- Veterans Peer Support Group: 724-757-1063 or www.VETS4VETS.us
- Energy Assistance Hotline: 1-866-857-7095
- Westmoreland County Housing Authority: 724-832-7248 or 1-800-WCHA-NOW
- United Way 211 Helpline

The following chart summarizes referrals made in 2020 and 2021 academic years:

2020 AY

Location	Alcohol Referrals	Drug Referrals
Westmoreland:ATC	0	1
Westmoreland: Fayette	0	0
Westmoreland: Indiana	0	0
Westmoreland:Latrobe	0	0
Westmoreland: Murrysville	0	0
Westmoreland: New Kensington	0	0
Westmoreland: Youngwood	2	5

2021 AY

Location	Alcohol Referrals	Drug Referrals
Westmoreland:ATC	0	1
Westmoreland: Fayette	0	0
Westmoreland: Indiana	0	0
Westmoreland:Latrobe	1	0
Westmoreland: Murrysville	0	0
Westmoreland: New Kensington	0	0
Westmoreland: Youngwood	0	1

Many of our students have disclosed to counselors that they are in recovery or already seeking help with drug and alcohol addiction. Therefore, our referrals are minimal compared to the number of students we know are struggling with addiction. Through a generous grant from the RK Mellon Foundation, we employ a social worker and mental health counselor to help our students work through issues of addiction if they are not connected to outside resources. In addition, we contract with an outside agency that can do assessments with students and ongoing therapy.

Employee Assistance Program

An Employee Assistance Program is a benefit to employees at Westmoreland County Community College. The EAP offers services that relate to the AOD program. These services include short and long term counseling, substance abuse professional services, rehabilitation services, and wellness. Human Resources proactively trains supervisors to recognize signs of alcohol or drug abuse as well as how to refer employees to the EAP. Further, over the past two years, Human Resources have engaged faculty and staff in wellness programming to further reduce factors such as stress or tobacco use that are highly correlated with alcohol and other drug use.

CARE Team

Sometimes, members of the college community demonstrate concerning behavior, including but not limited to, the use of alcohol or other drugs. The CARE Team is designed to be helpful in these situations.

Westmoreland has two distinct CARE teams functioning for students and employees. These teams exist to serve as a collaborative network, focused on the prevention and early intervention of students and staff who are experiencing distress or are engaging in harmful or potentially harmful behaviors. The CARE team identifies these students and employees, develops intervention and support strategies and makes referrals as needed. Any member of the college community can refer a student or staff member, believed to be at risk, by completing a "Notice of Concern " form, which is located on the MyWestmoreland portal. The completed form is sent to CARE Team members for review. All information provided is confidential.

Campus Programming

Active, passive, and alternative programming are important aspects of the College's AOD program. The College received a grant to assist in going Smoke and Tobacco Free throughout the time of this review. Thus a new committee was formed to write and implement a policy as well as smoking cessation activities.

Please see below for a complete list of campus programming.

2020-2021 AOD Programming				
Programming/Event Name	Date(s) of Program	Employee	Students	# of Participants
Guest speaker: Mental Health & Vaping David Fialko, a Nationally Certified	3/23/2021		x	3 (excluding participants)

Tobacco Treatment Specialist from The Council of Southeast PA. Partnership with Bucks County Community College.				from other institutions)
Presentation: Sage's Army Discussion of drug addiction and ways Sage's Army and other agencies can help.	4/15/2021		x	14
2021-2022 AOD Programming				
Programming/Event Name	Date(s) of Program	Employee	Students	# of Participants
Narcan Training	04/01/22	x	x	27
Sage's Army Presentation	03/30/2022		x	Attendance not taken
Resource Fair Multiple organizations that offer social services to our students table at Youngwood	03/23/2022	x	x	Attendance not taken

Drug-Free Campus/Workplace Policy

Westmoreland County Community College complies with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989, to maintain a drug-free campus.

Further, we have urged our community to take an active role in the protection of themselves and others. As such, the college community reviews the Substance Abuse Policy and Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention for college employees annually. The aforementioned policies contain the following provisions, in compliance with EDGAR 86 Subpart B:

- Standards of conduct that clearly prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by student and employees on its property or as part of any activity (See the Code of Student Conduct, Drug and Alcohol Policy, or Substance Abuse Policy)
- A description of the applicable legal sanctions under local, State, and/or Federal law for the unlawful possession or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol (See the Drug and Alcohol Policy)
- A description of the health risks associated with the use of illicit drugs and the abuse of alcohol (See the Drug and Alcohol Policy)
- A description of any drug or alcohol counseling, treatment, or rehabilitation or re-entry programs that are available to employees or students (See Substance Abuse Policy and/or the Drug and Alcohol Policy)
- Disciplinary sanctions for violation of drug and alcohol related offenses (See Code of Student Conduct, Drug and Alcohol Policy, and Substance Abuse Policy)

Policy Distribution

Once each semester, an email regarding our Drug and Alcohol Policy is e-mailed to employees and students. The open rates for the emails are well above national average (17%) at about a rate ranging from 43% to 58%. Further, annually the College's communication department prints informative brochures about Drug and Alcohol Prevention. These brochures contain the college's Drug and Alcohol Policy, violations, disciplinary actions related to drug and alcohol offenses, legal penalties for drug related offenses, health risks, and resources for treatment. These brochures are distributed in every Westmoreland location and are included in our New Student Orientation Program. Further, the same

information is also included in our Student Handbook which is made available to all students through our webpage and student portal.

Westmoreland County Community College Employees are provided information about the Drug and Alcohol Prevention program at their New-Hire Orientation Session. During a one-on-one session with a representative from Human Resources, new employees review the Substance Abuse Policy and information regarding the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). All employees certify through signature that they have read and understand the Substance Abuse Policy and have received information about the EAP.

Policy Violations

In the 2018-2019 academic year, there were arrests for a drug abuse violation at the Youngwood Campus of Westmoreland County Community College. The arrests were not students thus no violation of the Code of Student Conduct or Drug and Alcohol Policy.

In the same academic year, at the Youngwood Campus, two students were adjudicated for alcohol and/or drug related offenses. One case had enough evidence to substantiate the claim, and the student was given educational sanctions.

In the 2019-2020 academic year, there were three incidents at the Youngwood campus involving alcohol and/or other drugs. In three incidents, the Code of Student Conduct nor the Drug and Alcohol Policy were violated as they were non-students.

Recommendations

The review of Westmoreland County Community College's AOD program was comprehensive for the academic years of 2018 and 2019. Westmoreland County Community College is in compliance with the 1989 Amendments to the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act per Part 86 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) - the Drug Free Schools and Campuses Regulations. Westmoreland has demonstrated that it has an effective Drug and Alcohol Prevention

Policy of which students and employees are notified of, and educated on, consistently. Further, Westmoreland makes appropriate referrals to community organizations and enforces the Code of Student Conduct Consistently. Nevertheless, there are areas that Westmoreland could improve upon. Moving forward, the following additions and/or revisions to the AOD prevention program will be implemented:

- Increase the use of assessment to better identify strategies through which to engage students and employees in alcohol and substance abuse prevention.
- Increase the ease of reporting and tracking referrals and/or violations for alcohol or other drug related issues.
 - o While college personnel keep track of referrals and violations, easing the method by which this is done through the use of technology will make it easier for the staff.
- Improved communication
 - o While Westmoreland notifies students and employees of the Drug and Alcohol Policy as required through email, we can still improve both student and employee open rates. Utilizing other technologies to ensure that students and employees are opening and reading the email notification will help assure the college that this policy is widely known and understood.

Westmoreland County Community College will continue to develop, implement, and assess best practices as they relate to creating a healthy, safe, and positive working and learning environment for our employees and students, respectively.

