Trinity University Guidelines for Groups/Organizations
Alcohol at Unsanctioned Private Local Events

This has been prepared to offer clarity and guidance for students who wish to host events that include alcohol at large, open, off-campus parties in the San Antonio area.

Synopsis
Through Trinity policies, groups and organizations are provided opportunities to register events that feature the lawful serving and consumption of alcohol. When students host other events off campus, and outside of the parameters of policy, they do so at their own risk and as private individuals and the University has no responsibility for those events.

Individual students, whose conduct shows blatant disrespect for the health, safety, and care of others, property, and the community, risk, at minimum, campus judicial action. The University purposefully does not own, recognize, or manage any residential facilities off-campus. The informal moniker of an off-campus residence by its occupants, or by the student body, does not establish a connection between the property, the organization, and the University.

Summary Points
- Trinity University acknowledges that college students drink alcohol and cares deeply about student health and safety. As an academic institution, the University consistently works with students and organizations to promote safe and responsible social drinking practices regardless of location.
- Trinity University works cooperatively with students to define group activities. For the purpose of these guidelines, the term “Group” will include sponsored or recognized organizations, clubs, teams, or any campus-related groups organized in relation to a specific campus activity (band, campus paper, Residential Life student staff, etc.).
- Individual hosts assume all risk and liability as hosts. In this context, individuals may be held accountable if conduct injures another/others, affects property, has an adverse impact on the reputation of the University, or negatively affects the welfare of others.
- The University has a responsibility to assist campus neighbors who present complaints about student behavior off campus. The University will encourage neighbors to work with local officials and will informally assist in addressing conduct issues with students, though a formal option exists.

Proposed guidelines and clarifications

Parties
A party at a private residence is defined as a pre-planned event that is open to the general student body, draws significant pedestrian and vehicular traffic (and/or associated parking), and that includes a large number of people. Usually, an event that exceeds approximately 25-30 people would be viewed as a party.
A party will generally be considered as group sponsored, and the group may face judicial action, if any of
the following conditions are met:

1. The party is for a purpose directly related to the organization – such as recruitment.
2. Group funds are used in any way to support all or part of the event.
3. Marketing (internally or externally) is either provided or sponsored by the group or makes some
   reference to a hosting group.
4. A reasonable person or outside entity would associate this event with a group.

**Gatherings** are defined as relatively small get-togethers between friends and acquaintances. Students
have the right to associate, on their own time and in their own residences, regardless of affiliation. Such
gatherings can be pre-planned or spontaneous.

**Mixers** are official Greek events generally between two groups and must be registered. Mixers fall under
University guidelines.

**Responsible friend policy**
In order to reinforce to students that their health and safety is more important than identifying
potential violations, the responsible friend component of the alcohol policy is extended to groups and
individuals off campus. According to that policy:

When a student contacts University officials or other helping professionals out of concern for another
student’s health and safety none of the students present (including the intoxicated student) will be
considered for alcohol policy or other violations for that specific incident. (Note that when hazing may
have occurred, state law requires that such incidents be reported.)
*Please note that a recurring pattern of dangerous behavior by an individual or group may lead to
discussions of educational and proactive strategies for risk reduction.*

**Contact and assistance**
Generally, the Student Affairs staff invites and expects that students and student leaders will
communicate about events and situations that may put the health and welfare of any individual at risk.
The staff is committed to the safety of students and to assisting students in dangerous situations. It is
incumbent upon students to initiate communication about issues in an effort to work in a trusting and
caring environment.

**Neighbors**
Trinity University expects students to be good neighbors in the San Antonio community. Large or unruly
student events in private residences may have an adverse impact on the reputation of the University.
Students are encouraged to work proactively with neighbors. The University will assist neighbors and
students in creating a positive living environment when approached by either party.
Appendix
Current Policies

The following statements and policies reflect an understanding that the University does not control the personal and private decision-making of students related to alcohol. Nevertheless, because the consequences of irresponsible alcohol use anywhere can become a community or campus issue, the University reserves the right to act as needed.

Foundational policies and procedures

Excerpts from Organizational Handbook

Trinity University officially recognizes student organizations in an effort to support the co-curricular components of student life. Organizations may not be in violation of state or federal law, commit or be committed to acts of violence, endanger the University’s tax exempt status, engage in activities hazardous to themselves or others, or be in violation of any of the regulations stated in the Student Organization Handbook or the Student Handbook. All organizations that receive recognition are required by Texas state law to be trained in risk management procedures. When student organizations are complying with Trinity University policies and procedures, as stated above, the University extends insurance coverage to them.

In defining the relationship between the University and student organizations, specifically in relation to alcohol, the University provides student organizations guidelines to promote safety, responsibility, and accountability—primarily through third party hosting and BYOB policies.

Official statements and policies

Statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities

In fostering responsible student conduct, policies that govern disciplinary procedures play a role along with example, counseling, and admonition.

Standards of Conduct

Policies and the consequences of violation are applicable to the conduct of a student on campus, at University sponsored events, or at any other location or time when the conduct (1) has an adverse effect on the reputation of the University, (2) negatively affects the safety or welfare of University students, employees, or neighbors, and (3) interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the University.

Violations of local, state, or federal law are not condoned by the University and alleged violations may be referred to the campus judicial process without regard to whether civil official have also acted in the cases.

Trinity University Alcohol Philosophy

The Trinity Alcohol Coalition of students, staff, and faculty has developed the following three tenets related to alcohol: Trinity University cares deeply about the health and safety of students; acknowledges that students will drink, but discourages irresponsible drinking; and enforces policies related to alcohol possession, and consumption. These policies were formed in accordance with state law and for the protection of the health and safety of students.

Trinity University values the freedom of those who live and work here to make their own choices, and it values the education that equips them to exercise that freedom responsibly. Choices regarding alcohol,
in particular, are a matter of individual and community interest because poor decisions can negatively impact personal health and the public environment.

Trinity respects the choices of those who consume alcohol within reasonable and legal bounds and those who avoid it altogether. However, because the consumption of alcohol can impair an individual’s judgment and lead to devastating damage and loss, this policy aims to limit those negative consequences in order to sustain a positive, livable, learning environment on campus. In order to sustain a positive, livable, learning environment on campus, students remain accountable to all University policies even when drinking; intoxication does not serve as an excuse for violating any policies. Finally, this policy intentionally promotes awareness of the physical, emotional, mental, and legal ramifications of irresponsible alcohol use because freedom relies not only on rules but, most importantly, on informed thinking.

Students (or members acting on behalf of chartered, sponsored, Greek, or registered student organizations, or other formal or informal groups) sponsoring any events or activities off campus and not in compliance with University alcohol policies, do so of their own volition and at their own personal risk and liability for such activities. Students who attend these events are still subject to all Trinity University policies governing student conduct.

Students are personally responsible for complying with state and local laws and the University alcohol policy. Trinity University respects students’ privacy and autonomy, assumes that they will behave legally and responsibly, and will not closely monitor the activities of individual students or members of student organizations.