



Student Alcohol Survey: UCLA Trends from 2003 to 2012

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Introduction

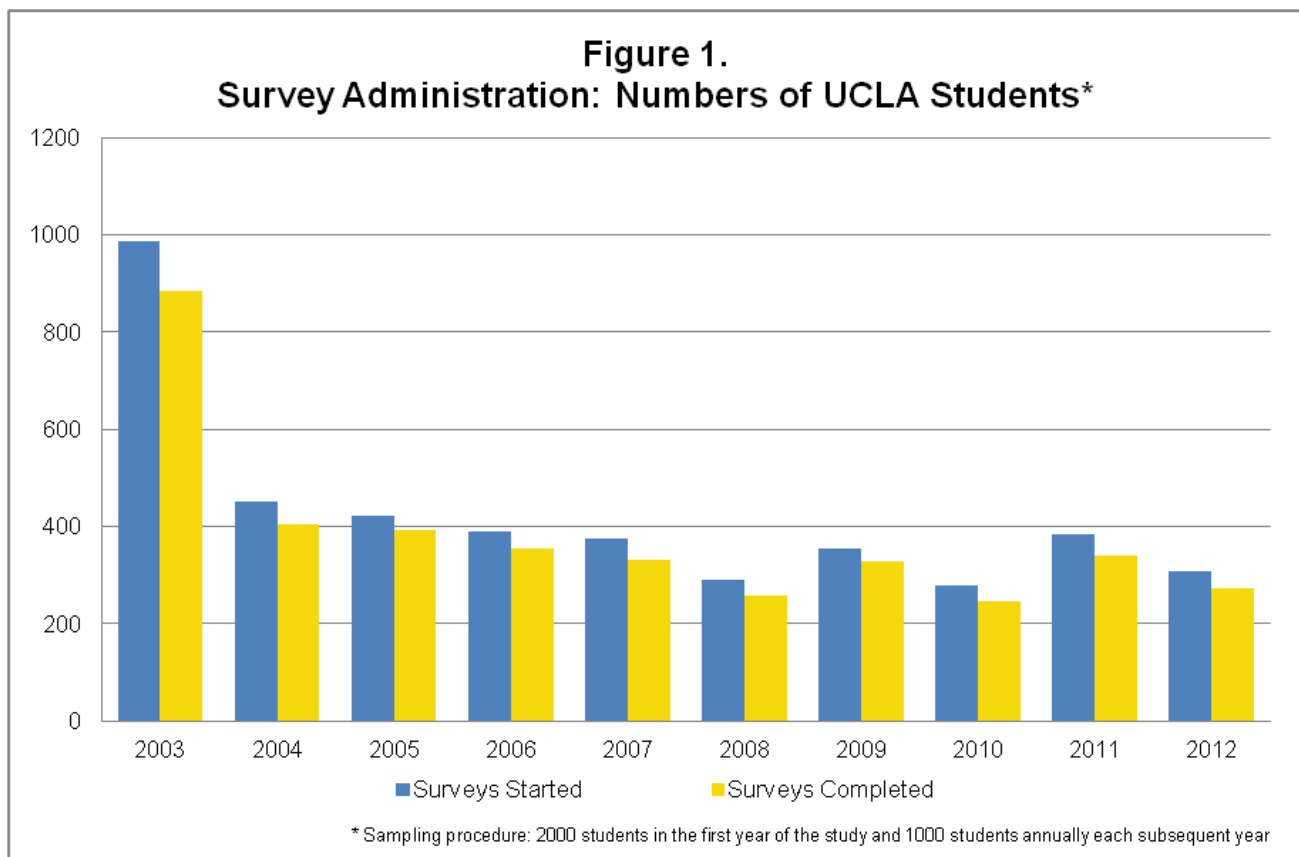
This brief covers results from the Student Alcohol Survey (SAS) administered annually in the fall quarter between 2003 and 2012. UCLA undergraduate students were polled on various topics related to personal and campus safety, including patterns of alcohol and drug consumption, drinking consequences, and the surrounding campus and community environment with regard to these issues. The information is presented in a fashion that allows readers to understand both the prevalence of behaviors among UCLA undergraduates as well as view the trends across a 10-year period. This report focuses on the data regarding student alcohol and drug use, as well as behaviors and consequences related to alcohol use.

Students at UCLA are affected by their own alcohol consumption and the drinking-related behaviors of others. Although trends for both students who drink and those exposed to others' alcohol use reveal relatively low levels of negative impact, the findings provide valuable insight for considering how to reduce overall harm in the UCLA student community. The SAS asked students to report how drinking and alcohol-related experiences affected them in their social lives, academics, health, and personal safety. For the most part, the trends illustrate that only a small minority of UCLA students experience severe consequences like violence or conduct interventions related to alcohol use. On average, more common behaviors and experiences consisted of interpersonal conflicts, lapses in personal judgment, and poor school performance.

## Survey Administration

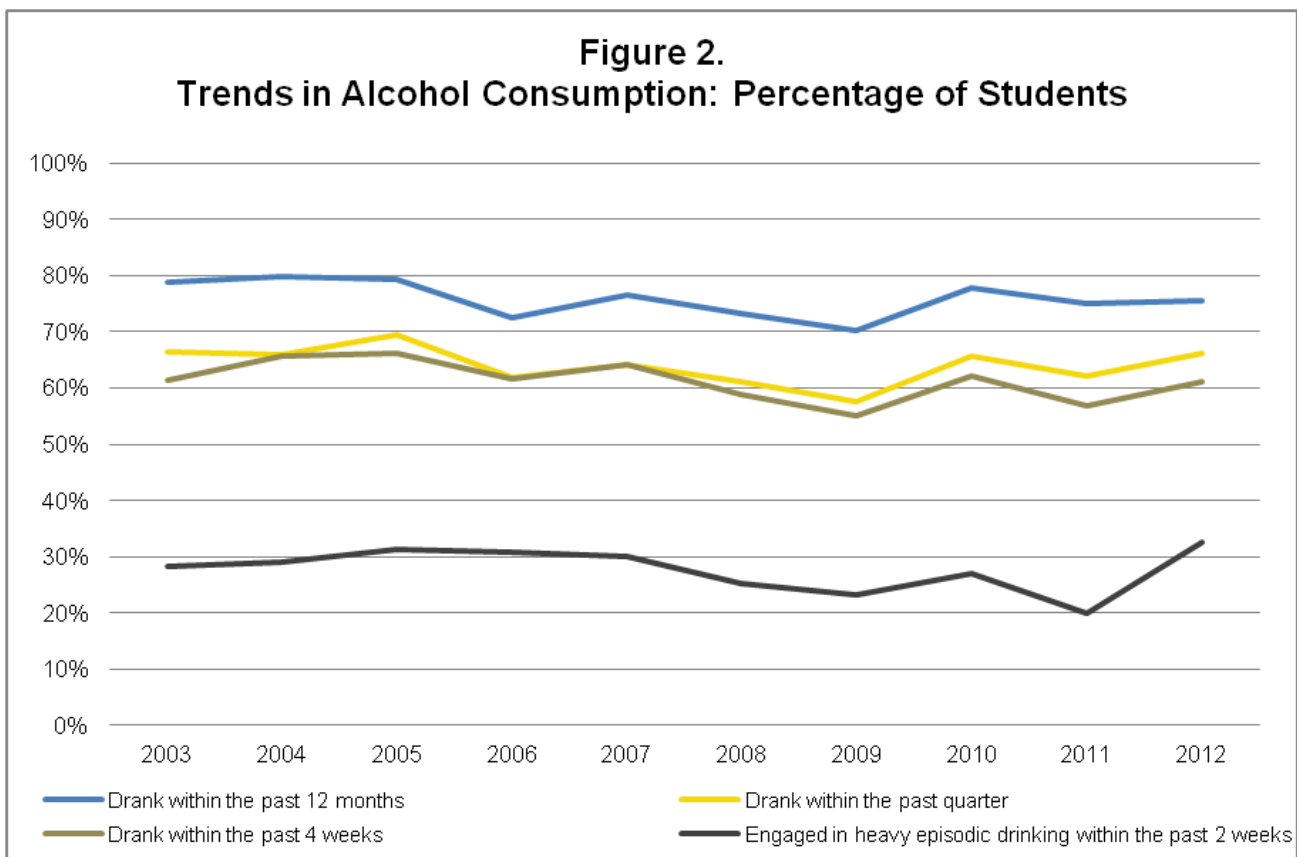
The Student Alcohol Survey (SAS) was conducted by the Prevention Research Center as part of the California Safer Schools and Colleges Study which explored alcohol and drug use and prevention efforts on college campuses in the University of California and California State University system. The SAS was administered by the Survey Sciences Group each fall between 2003 and 2012, conducted in partnership with UCLA, and funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Substance Abuse, and Mental Health Services Administration (CSAP/SAMHSA).

Randomly selected full-time undergraduates over the age of eighteen were asked up to 434 questions about their drug and alcohol use patterns, drug- and alcohol-related behaviors among peers, and perceptions of their college experiences. The online survey used skip logic to avoid asking questions not relevant to individual students' experiences. The resulting data were provided to UCLA each year. Per the overall study design, 2,000 survey invitations were sent out in the first year; slightly fewer than half of those who were polled responded (Figure 1). In subsequent administrations, 1,000 invitations were sent annually to students with an average response rate of 36%. Of those who chose to respond across the years, nearly 90% completed the entire survey.



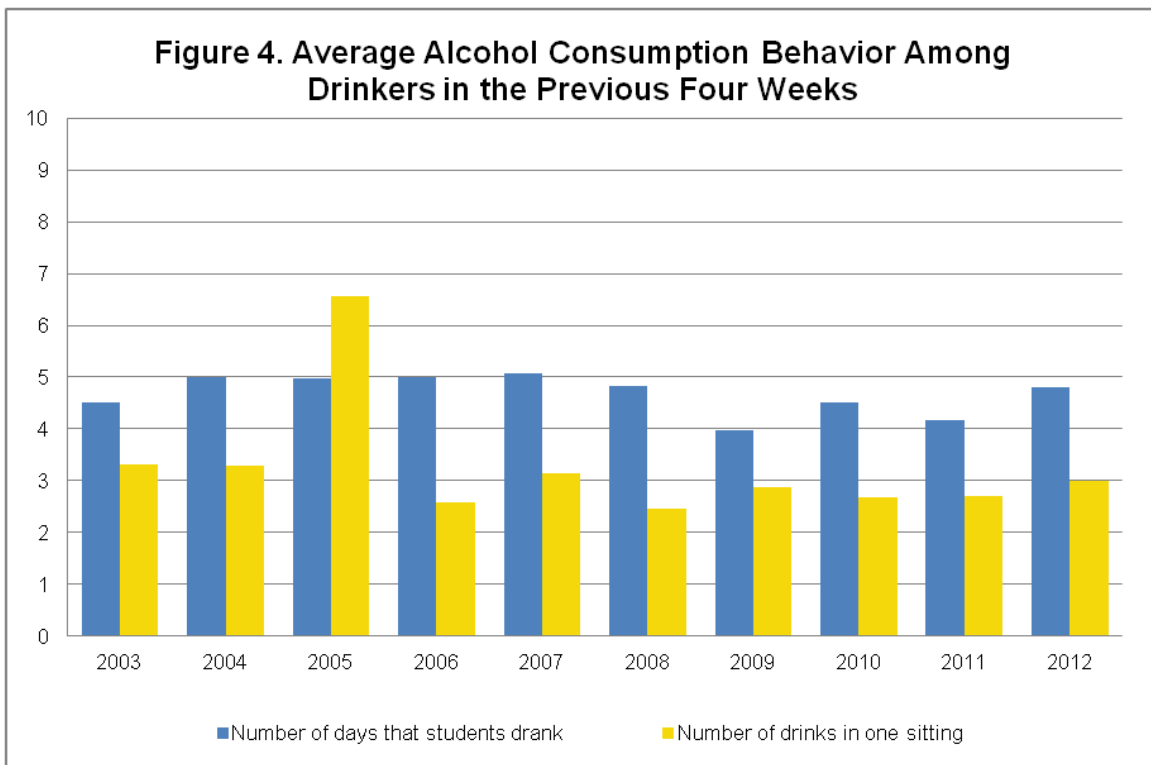
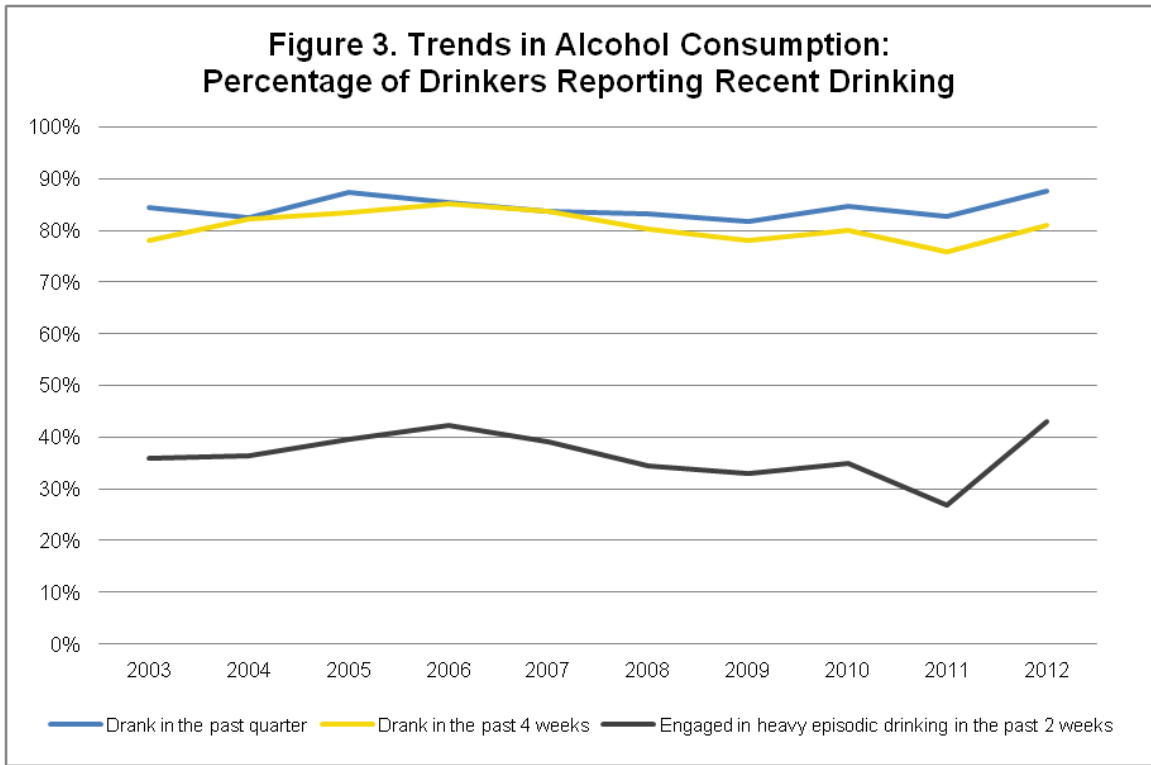
## Alcohol Consumption

The majority of students reported having at least one drink of alcohol in the previous twelve months. This percentage has fluctuated as high as 80% of students when the survey was first administered to as low as 70% in 2009; more recently, about three-quarters of students report having had alcohol in the past year (Figure 2). Compared to those who had consumed alcohol within the past year (trend average = 76%), somewhat smaller percentages of all respondents indicated drinking during the past four weeks (trend average = 61%) and “since the beginning of the quarter” (trend average = 64%). A smaller proportion engaged in heavy episodic drinking within the two-week period before the survey administration. In this survey, heavy episodic drinking is defined by the amount of alcohol consumed during the past two weeks: for men, this entails drinking five or more alcoholic drinks “in a row,” for women, four or more “in a row.”



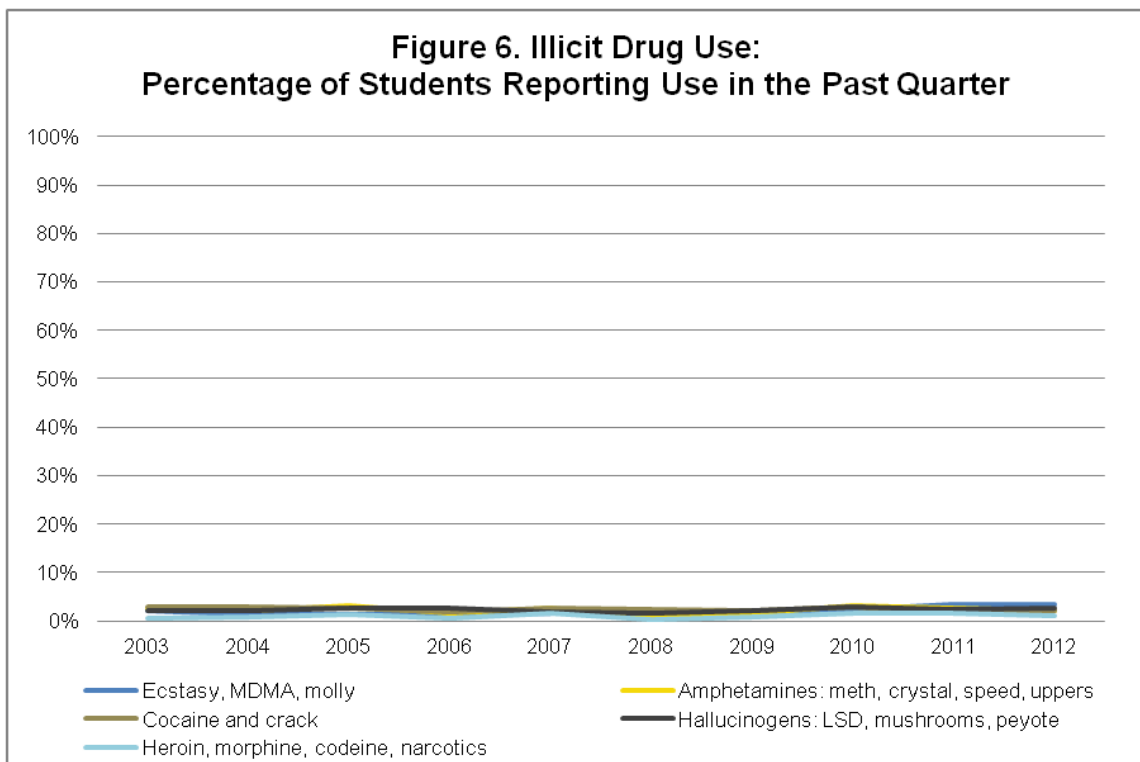
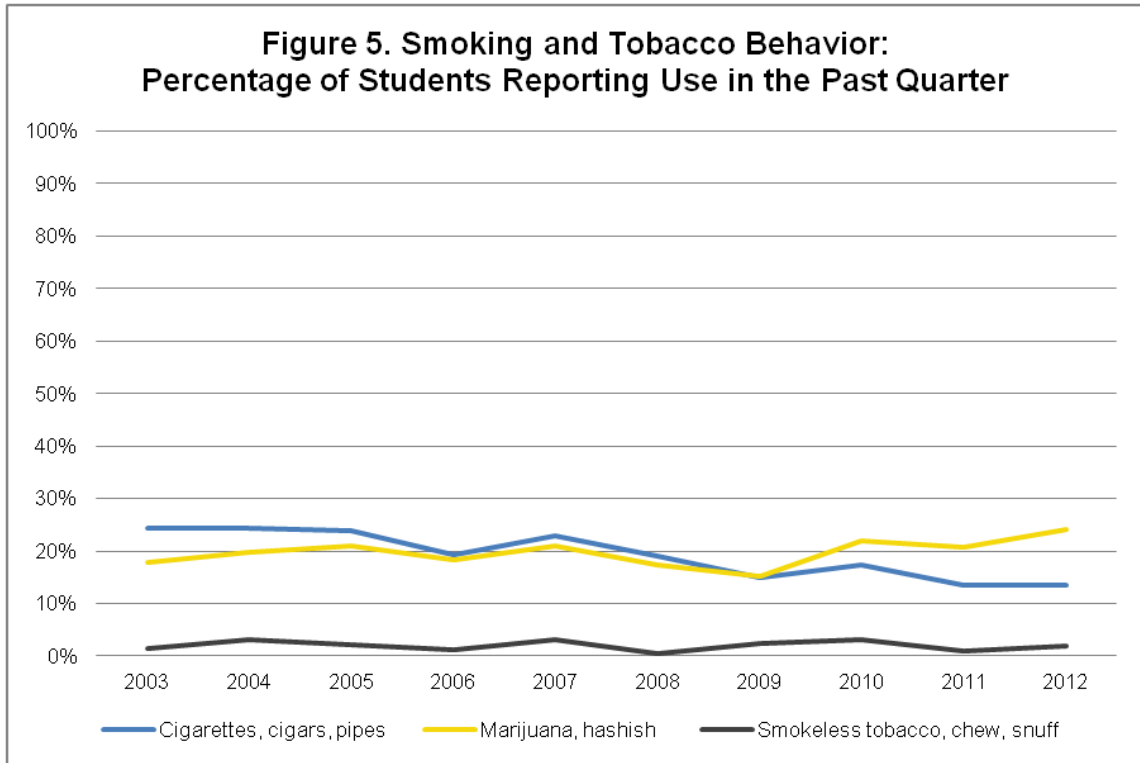
### *Trends among “Drinkers”*

Of those students defined in this report as “drinkers” (i.e., those who reported *any* alcohol consumption in the past year), approximately 85% reported having at least one alcoholic beverage during the past quarter. Of those “drinkers” who reported consumption during the past month, an average of 37% revealed engaging in heavy episodic drinking within the previous two weeks (Figure 3). On average, student “drinkers” tended to consume alcohol between four to five days per month (Figure 4). The trend average reveals that students estimated consuming slightly more than 3 drinks per sitting during that same four-week period.



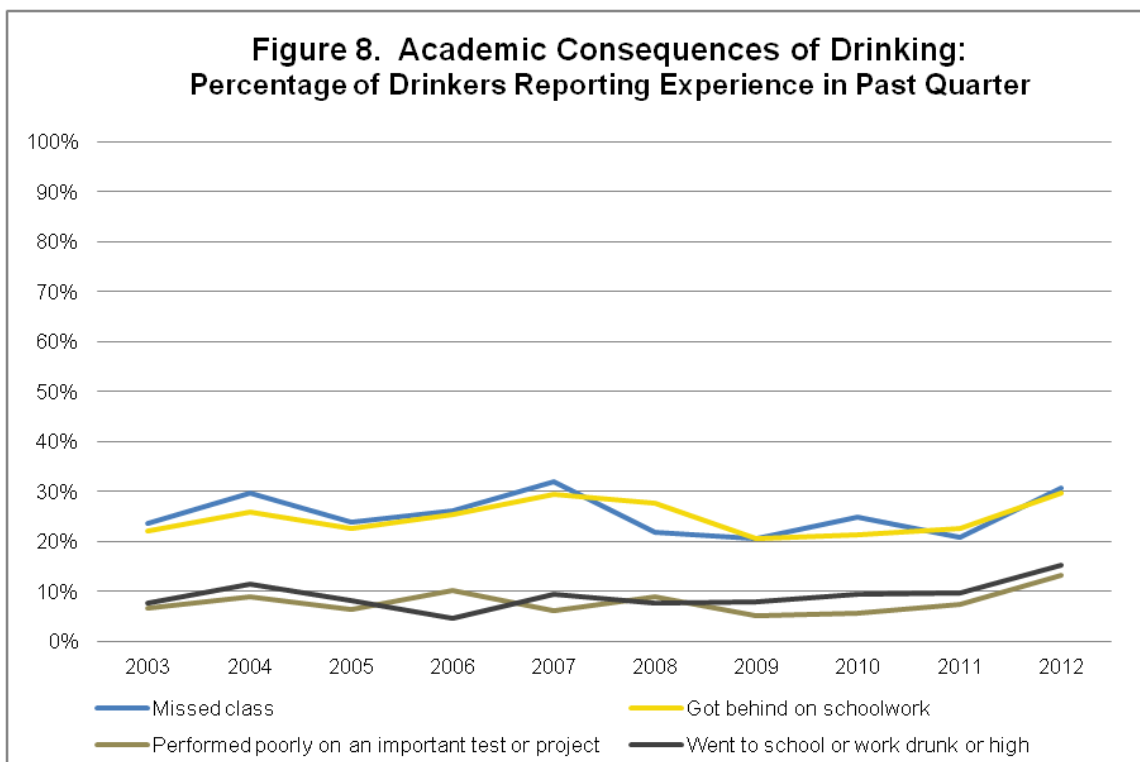
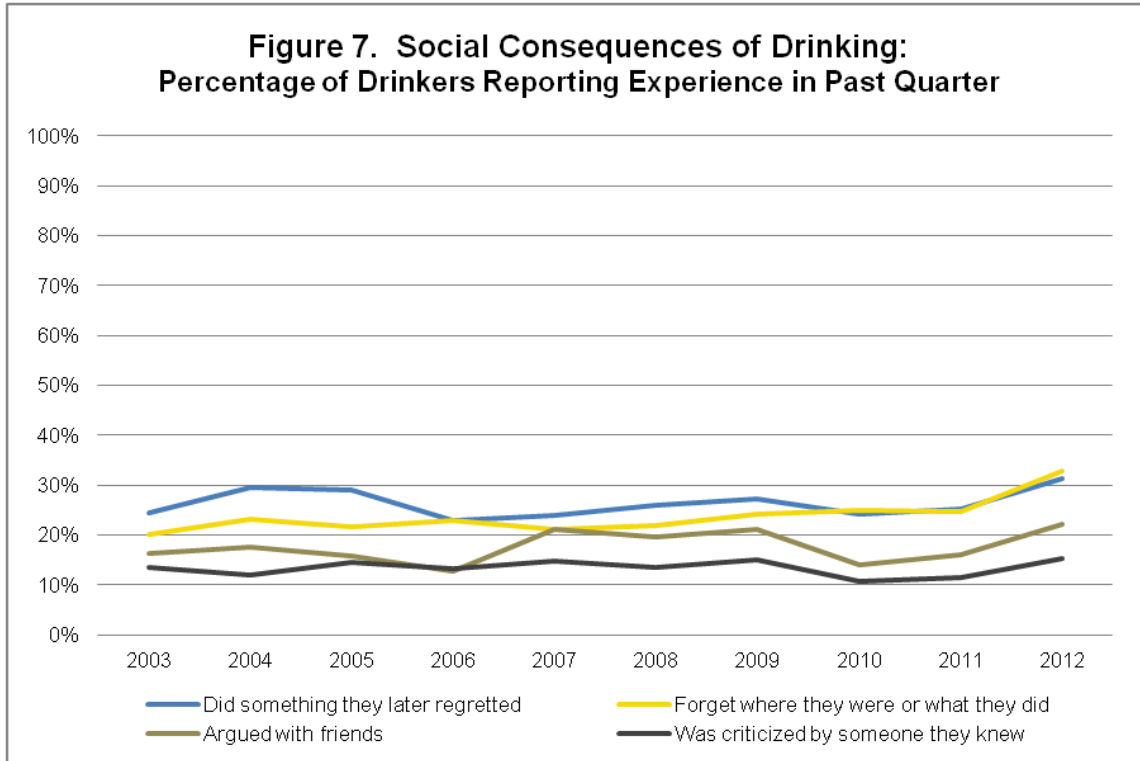
## Tobacco and Drug Use

UCLA students decreasingly used cigarettes during the study period, indicating an overall 10% decline in tobacco smoking behavior between 2003 and 2012. Although marijuana consumption has traditionally been low among undergraduates, its use by students has roughly paralleled that of smoked tobacco (Figure 5). On the whole, the vast majority of UCLA students have not used drugs of any type, with less than four percent of students reporting consumption of hallucinogens, uppers, narcotics, or ‘club’ drugs (Figure 6).

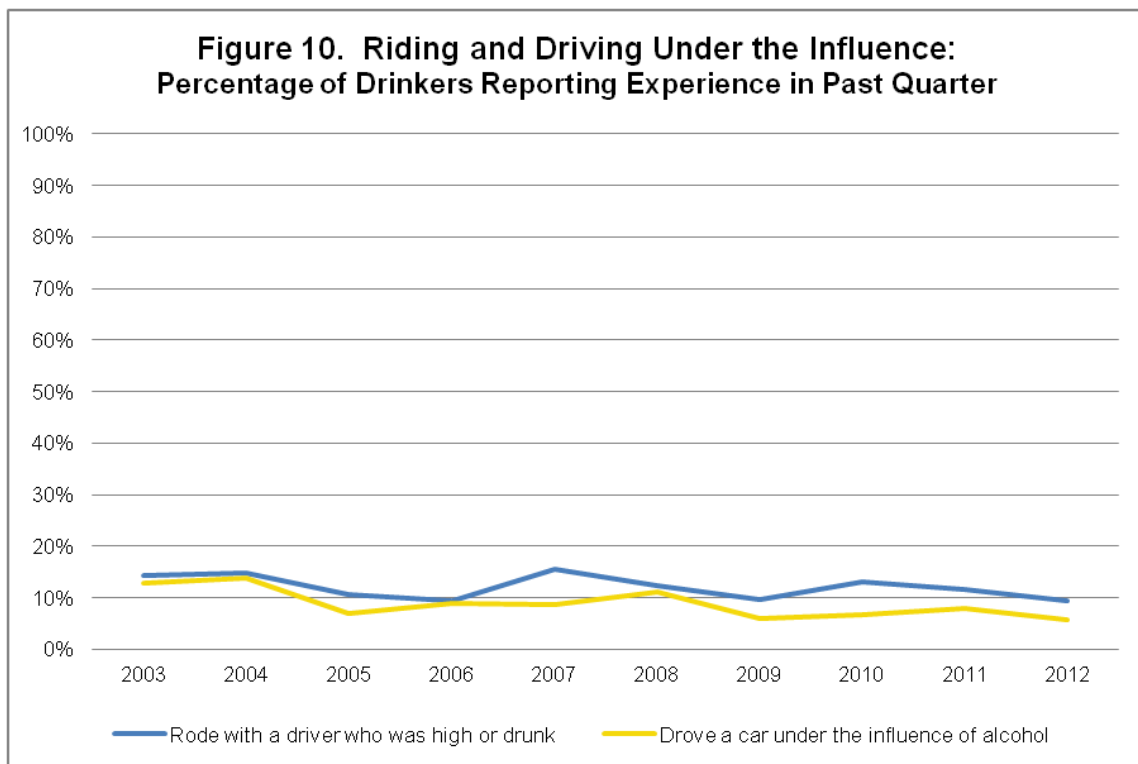
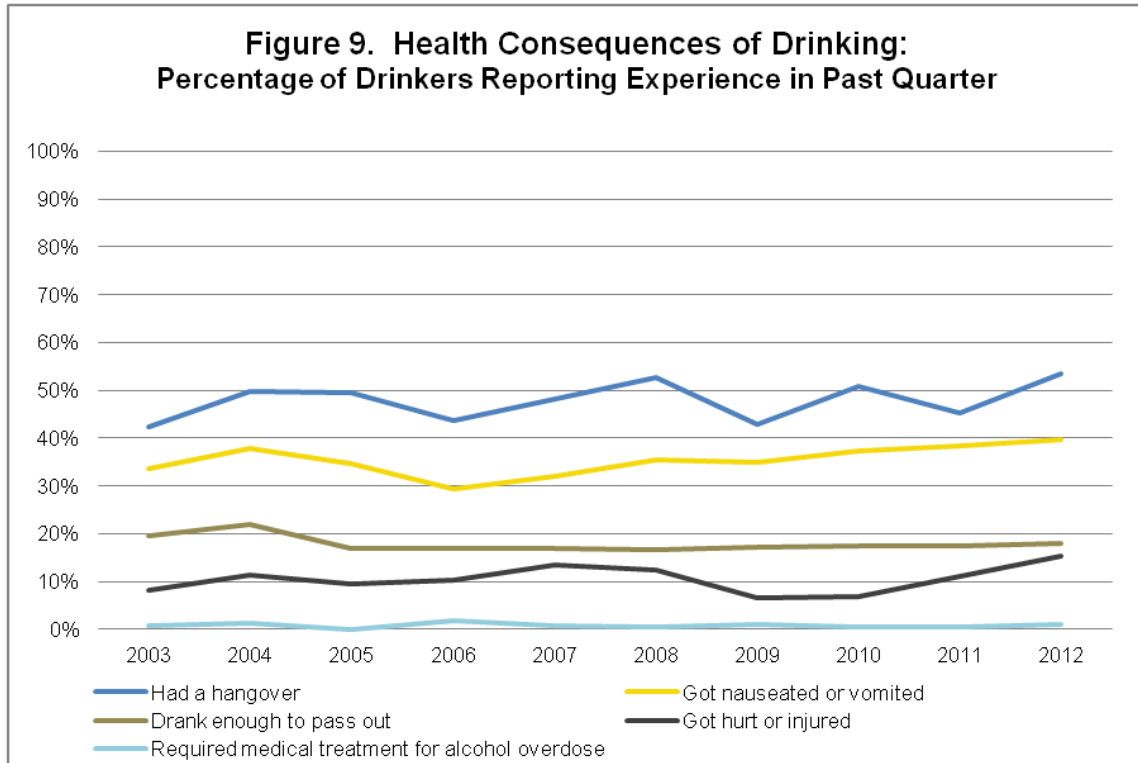


## Consequences of Personal Drinking

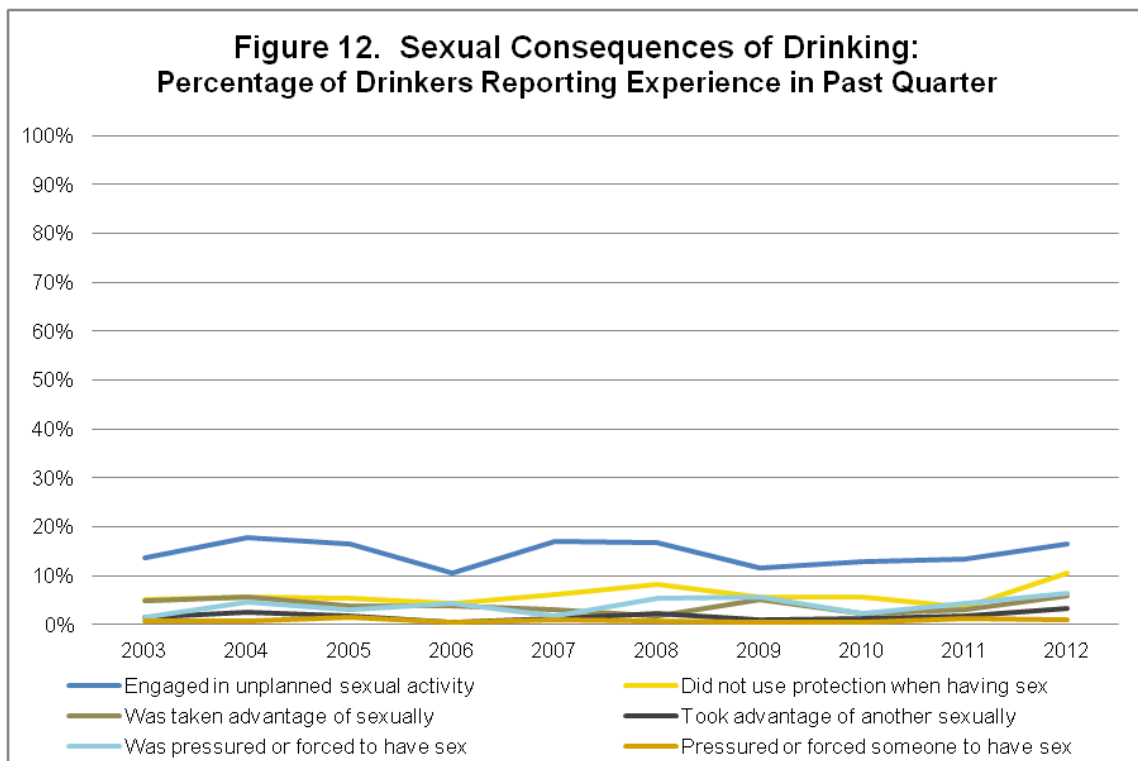
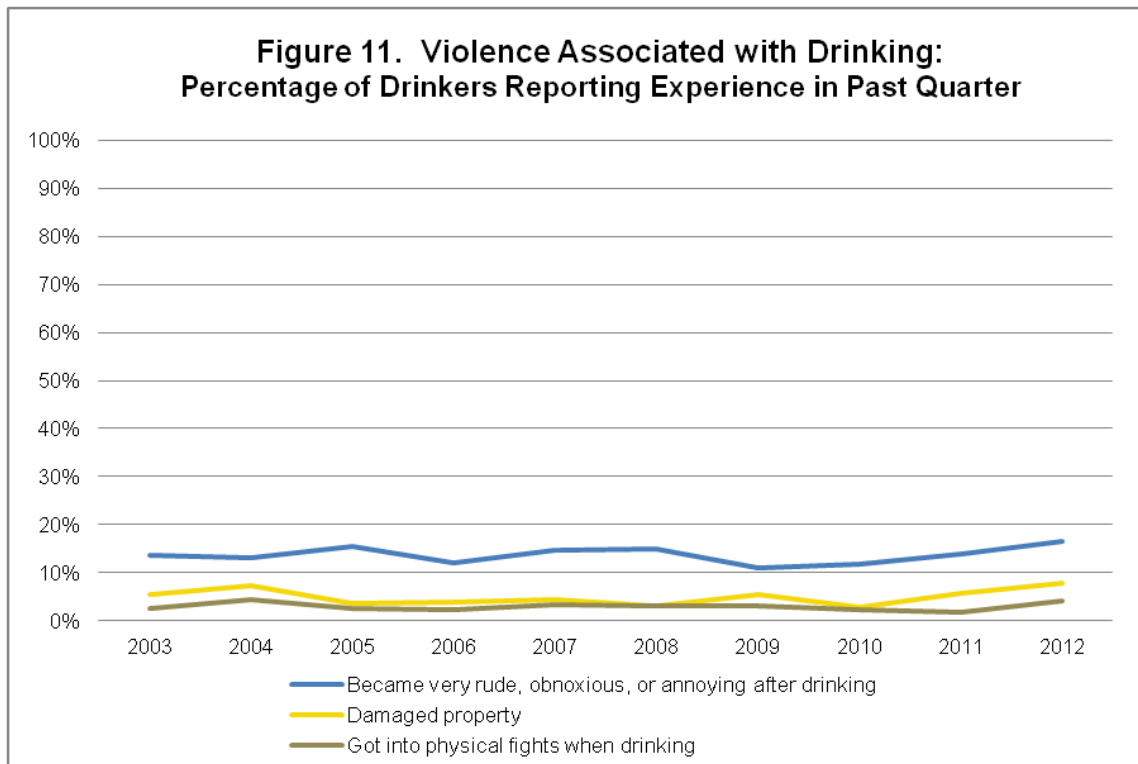
An average of 64% of all students between 2003 and 2012 reported drinking alcohol within the quarter that the survey was administered. Of those students who drank, the most common consequences directly related to drinking were having a hangover, feeling nauseated, doing something they later regretted, forgetting things, missing classes, and getting behind in schoolwork (Figures 7, 8, and 9).



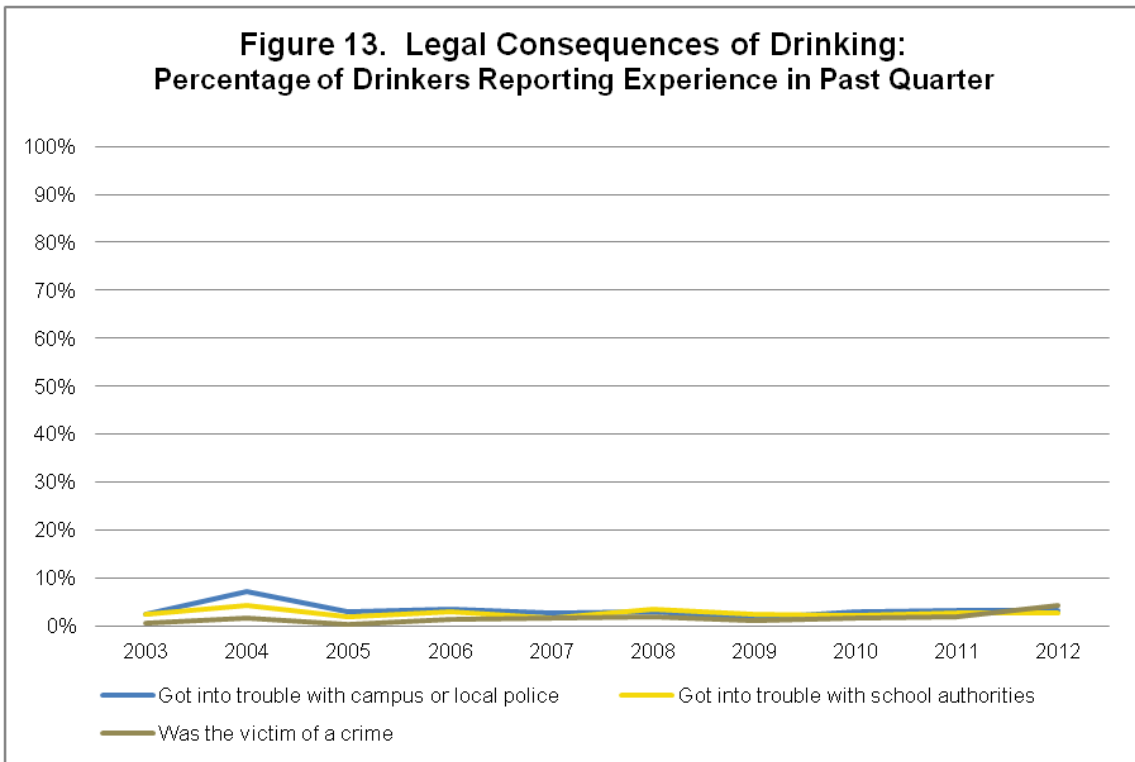
While approximately 25% to 45% of drinkers have experienced these effects related to their own alcohol consumption, it is important to remember that these statistics do not represent the entire UCLA student body; if reported as a proportion of the overall student population, the figures would be lower. Over the years, a consistent 10% to 20% of these drinkers have ridden in a car where the driver was under the influence (Figure 10), drunk to the point of unconsciousness (Figure 9), and engaged in unplanned sexual activity (Figure 12).



The trends for violence, sexual coercion, conduct violations, and criminal behaviors related to drinking were very low among drinkers across the board (Figures 11, 12, and 13).

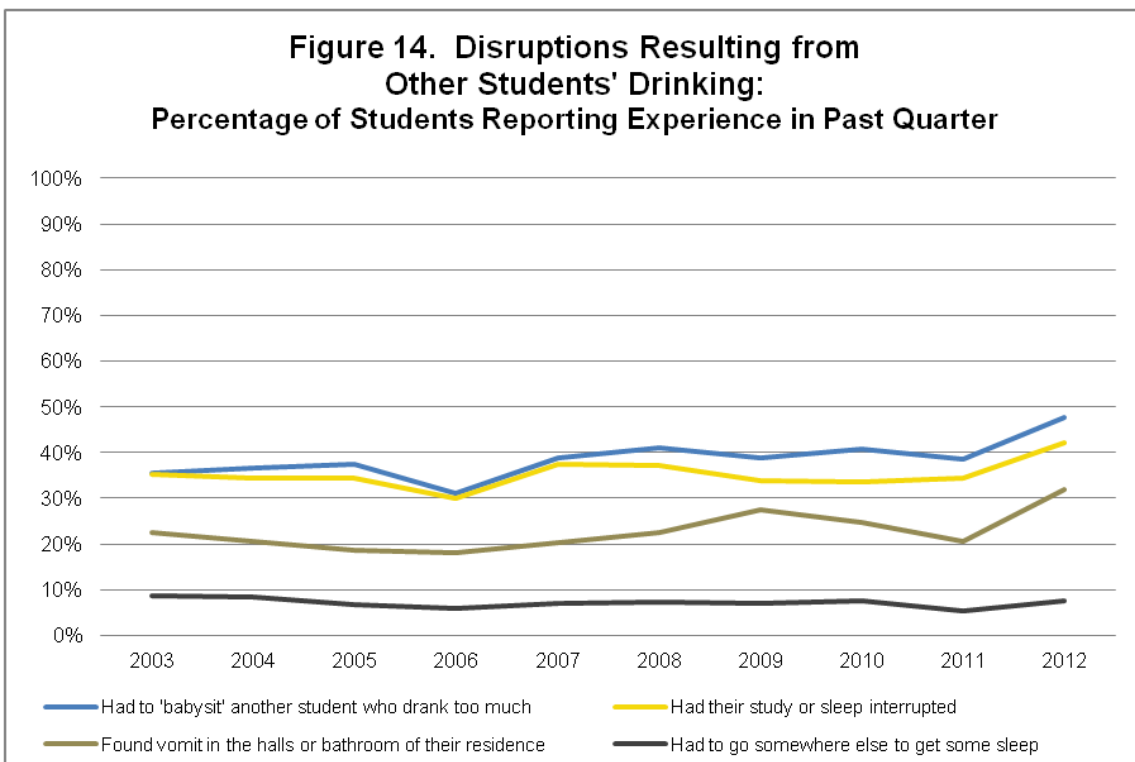






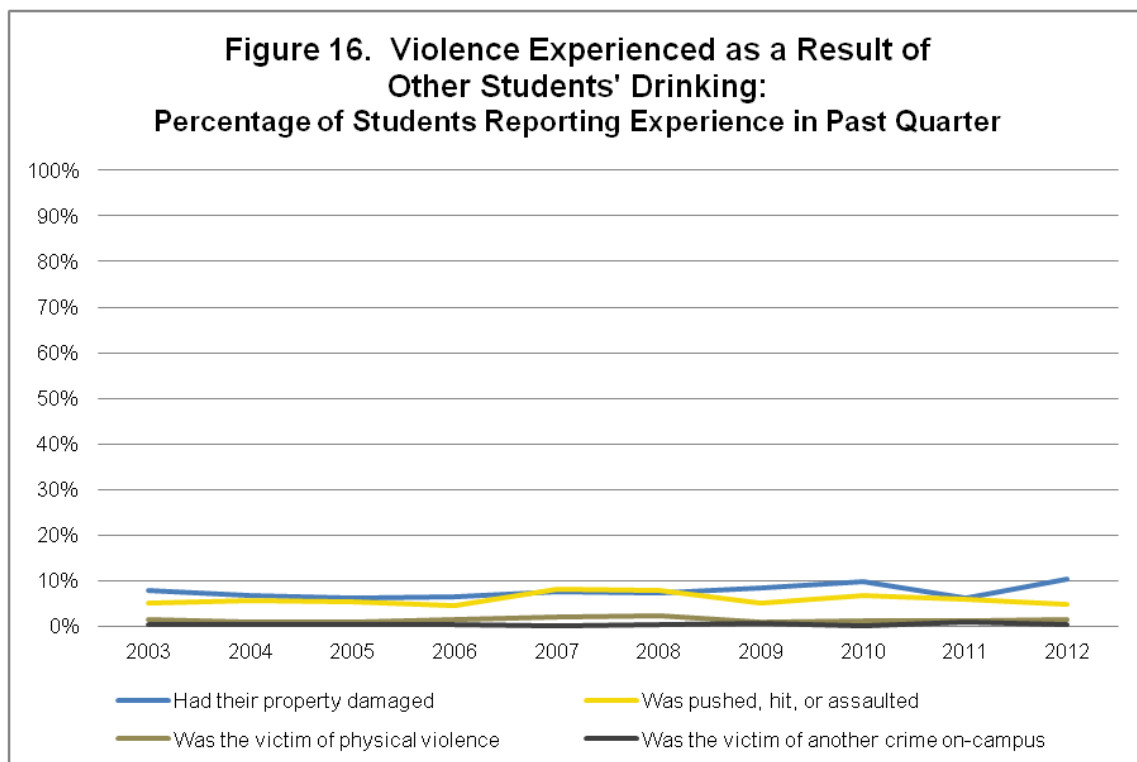
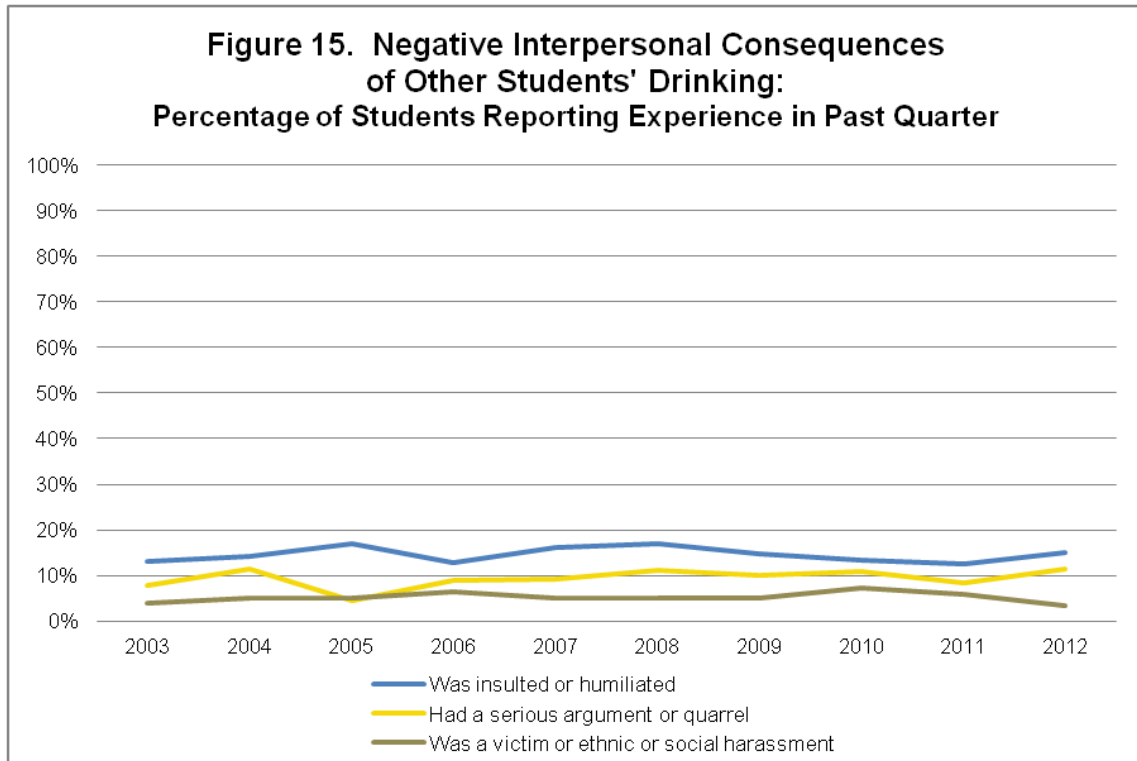
### Consequences of Others' Drinking

UCLA students had negative alcohol-related experiences regardless of whether they drank or not. The consequences of peers' drinking behaviors ranged from inconvenience to violence, and the impact of that drinking was most often felt in their residence. Over the ten years of the study, there was a slight increase in both the percentage of students who reported having to take care of other intoxicated students and those who found drinking-related vomit in their residence (Figure 14). More than one-third of students had their sleep



interrupted due to others' drinking.

While peer behavior may have caused disruptions in many students' lives, there were far fewer reports of more serious consequences like physical and sexual violence (Figures 16 and 17); the most common of these was experiencing unwanted sexual advances as a result of others' drinking.



**Figure 17. Sexual Violence as a Result of Other Students' Drinking:  
Percentage of Students Reporting Experience in Past Quarter**

