North Dakota State University
Tailgating Survey Summary of Results
Fall Semester 2004

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Rationale: This study was originally conducted in Fall of 2003 by President Chapman’s Tailgating Committee. The committee was created to consider alcohol consumption during tailgating and make recommendations to the president regarding a tailgating policy at NDSU. Prior to Fall of 2004, alcohol was not allowed during tailgating due to a campus policy banning the possession, sale, or consumption of alcohol on NDSU property without presidential approval (NDSU policy #155) and a city of Fargo ordinance banning the service or consumption of alcohol in public places (Article 25-15 of Fargo Municipal Code relating to alcoholic beverages). Though alcohol was not allowed, due to limited enforcement, consumption of alcohol was not uncommon. Upon recommendation by the Tailgating Committee, and beginning with the football season of 2004, the city ordinance was changed to make an exemption for the consumption of alcohol in a specifically designated lot on the Fargodome parking lot during NDSU sponsored tailgating activities. The following procedures are in place to insure that tailgating is conducted in a controlled manner and to minimize the consumption by minors as well as over consumption.

- Alcohol consumption is limited to one parking lot with clear borders, signage, and adequate security
- Anyone entering the tailgating area must be 21 years of age, or accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. Random monitoring and checking of IDs takes place by security staff
- Fans may not bring alcohol into the Fargodome
- Tailgating activities are closed during the game and permitted for a restricted period following the game

The original 2003 survey was conducted in order to understand the extent to which NDSU students consumed alcohol during tailgating, the prevalence of underage drinking, the amount and severity of alcohol related consequences experienced by students during tailgating, and students’ opinions of the proposed changes to the tailgating policy. The 2004 survey was initiated to determine whether or not the above behaviors and opinions had changed since the implementation of the new policy.

Method: In both 2003 and 2004 all NDSU undergraduate students were invited to participate in the survey through a web-based instrument developed by the GDC. Informed consent was gathered through an invitation letter and confidentiality was insured. T-tests were used to determine difference in means between the two years and chi-squares were used to determine differences between proportions/percentages for the two years. This report summarizes the percentages and means only. Results of the t-tests and chi-squares are available upon request.

Limitations: Low response rates necessitate caution in generalizing the findings beyond the sample. In addition, it may be the case that only students who felt strongly about tailgating responded to the survey.

Response rates:
2004: 1,076 (10%) responses out of population of 10,263 undergraduates
2003: 140 (14%) responses out of sample of 1,000 undergraduates
Overall summary of results:

- Little overall change is notable between 2003 and 2004 survey results.

- Perceptions of the amount of alcohol consumed by tailgating students was higher in the 2004 survey, as was the estimated percentage of students who drink while tailgating.

- Chi-square tests indicated that respondent's drinking quantities and prevalence of problems associated with drinking during tailgating were not significantly different between the 2003 and 2004 surveys.

- As in 2003, students are clearly in favor of allowing alcohol at tailgating, although the 2004 survey indicates that allowing alcohol did not seem to increase students’ reported game attendance.

- A smaller percentage (42%) of underage tailgating students reported consuming alcohol during tailgating in 2004 than in 2003 (47%). However, the difference was not statistically significant, meaning there was essentially no change between the 2003 and 2004 surveys.

- Open ended responses revealed that the overwhelming majority of respondents favor the current policy and feel that it is an essential part of the tradition of NDSU football. A small minority of respondents feel that the policy should be more lenient in allowing students under the age of 21 in the tailgating area, or expanding the hours of the tailgating.

- Of the small number of students who disagreed with the policy, some felt that tailgating with alcohol was undesirable for reasons of safety or poor behavior and other students felt that it was not consistent with current campus policy related to alcohol (reference to “dry” campus).

- Finally, a very small number of respondents did not have an opinion, or felt that the discussion over tailgating was taking attention away from more important academic concerns.
Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>‘04</th>
<th>‘03</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attended at least 1 NDSU home football games</td>
<td>89% (median 4)</td>
<td>86% (median 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in tailgating at NDSU football games</td>
<td>53% (median 1)</td>
<td>55% (median 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumed alcohol during NDSU tailgating</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underage tailgating students who consumed alcohol</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have observed underage drinking while tailgating</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe the tailgating area is a controlled area</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe the tailgating area is a family environment</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perceptions of students’ alcohol consumption:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Perceived Mean ‘04</th>
<th>Actual Mean ‘04</th>
<th>Perceived Mean ‘03</th>
<th>Actual Mean ‘03</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considering students who participate in tailgating, how many drinks on average do you think a typical student consumes while tailgating at NDSU football games?</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considering students who participate in tailgating, what percentage of students do you think drink alcohol while tailgating at NDSU football games?</td>
<td>53.77%</td>
<td>80.07%</td>
<td>48.96%</td>
<td>76.62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Problems:

Students were asked to report on a variety of negative consequences that they experienced at least once while they were drinking or because of their alcohol use during tailgating at NDSU football games. This list included consequences such as hangovers, missed work or school, neglected responsibilities, felt sick or thrown up, driven a car under the influence, got into fights, passed out, memory loss, trouble with law or school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>‘04</th>
<th>‘03</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students reporting having experienced one or more problems related to alcohol consumption during tailgating (all students)</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students reporting having experienced one or more problems related to alcohol consumption during tailgating (students who tailgated at least once)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students reporting having experienced one or more problems related to alcohol consumption during tailgating (students who reported drinking while tailgating at least once)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Policy & game attendance:

Students were asked to indicate how much they agree with the following statements using this scale (1= strongly disagree, 2=moderately disagree, 3=neutral, 4=moderately agree, 5=strongly agree).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean ‘04</th>
<th>Mean ‘03</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If the policy were changed so that alcohol was allowed during tailgating at NDSU football games I would be MORE likely to attend games.</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now that the policy has changed so that alcohol is allowed during tailgating at NDSU football games I attend more games than I would have had the policy not allowed alcohol.</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of open ended responses:**
Open ended responses were coded into recurrent themes. The following themes emerged frequently in the data and representative phrases follow each theme.

*Q: Do you agree with the current tailgating policy of allowing alcohol in a designated parking lot to individuals over the age of 21? Why or why not?*

**Major Themes (in descending order of most frequent – 1 to least frequent – 9)**

1. **Yes - social atmosphere, tradition, Bison Pride**
   - *This was the most frequently occurring theme*
   - Yes. Tailgating is a tradition that is special to many students and alumni of all ages, and that tradition includes drinking for a majority of those people. They should be able to consume alcohol if they are over 21 and are acting in a responsible manner. I see many people with their children in the tailgating area, and I didn't witness anyone acting in a way that would be negative for children.
   - Yes I do. There were so many people there. It brought the Bison Family together! It got everyone excited about the game and it also gave people the opportunity to visit with one-another. I think with the security going around, it was a nice, calm family atmosphere. It seemed like the calmer tailgaters were in one part and the students in another.

2. **Yes - people will drink anyway, this regulates and controls it so it doesn’t get out of hand**
   - It seems ok to me. If they have a place they can do it and more incentive to drink responsibly, that's better than trying to ban it altogether or letting it run wild.
   - Yes, Students and fans who are 21 need a place to go before a game where they won't be driving to get to the game after they have been drinking. It is a great place to celebrate bison football. You can't have football without tailgating. I LOVE IT. NDSU should embrace it more than it already does and include events at tailgating.

3. **Yes - if properly regulated**
   - Yes, if you are over 21 you are able to make adult decisions about alcohol and the amount you consume. As long as no laws are being broken and no disorderly conduct occurs there is no reason alcohol should not be part of a celebration of any kind including support of local athletic teams.
   - Yes-as long as it’s kept just in that lot

4. **Yes - but the policy should be changed to be more lenient**
   - I think it is still too strict. When I first came to NDSU I tailgated as a freshman. Last year was just ridiculous with no drinking at all and this year I was discouraged to even go to the game b/c all of my friends were tailgating and I still was not 21. It's too bad that tailgating has become so strict. I feel that these rules lower the school spirit that is visible in preparation for NDSU football games. Sure I do not encourage underage drinking, but it happens. I feel that if the person is acting responsibly they should be left alone and that there shouldn't be people at the entrance checking IDs and walking around to pass out minors.
   - I think that everybody should be allowed into the tailgating area. NDSU is not and will not ever be able to control underage drinking. If everyone is allowed into the tailgating area, those who are underage will at least be supervised which will in turn cause less problems.
5. Yes - Because you’re 21/It’s the law
- Yes, if you are 21, you should be able to drink. You should also be able to bring drinks to tailgating parties
- Agree, I think that if you are 21 you should be able to have a few beers. I think that there are some people who think that means get out of control, but I think anyone who is a responsible adult can handle this. Hopefully if someone is 21 they should be able to handle it and have a good time.

6. Yes - reference to other football programs, division one, attendance, NDSU’s reputation
- ... When I attended the SDSU game which allows tailgating the full day before the game, I did not witness any uncontrolled behavior from either set of fans and would personally like to see a similar set-up at this school.
- Yes, it is college football. Take a look around the nation. Do we want to be a legitimate program or not?

7. No - Safety issue, not a family environment
- No, I don’t think that they should be able to drink, it would make it more of a family environment. Kids look up to what those people are doing and they need to show responsibility and set a good example. Drinking does not show a good example.
- No. I think tailgating is a dangerous practice and should not be permitted. Fans can be rowdy enough without adding alcohol to the mix.

8. No - Not consistent with dry campus
- NO, NDSU is a dry campus, that includes NDSU football games and functions at the president house where I have seen alcohol being served. Either change the rule for the entire campus, i.e. dorms, residence halls, other athletic events for everyone over 21, or have the campus dry. I don't think that it is right to have a dry campus with exceptions.
- Not if the campus policy is continued to be the same “dry campus.” It is a joke to say that drinking is bad, unless of course you consume it for sporting events because that’s just the way things are done. Either you say it’s a dry campus and don't allow any drinking, or change the policy of being a dry campus. You can’t do both and not be laughed at, and that is what I hear all the time, how sporting events are treated differently then any other event.

9. Don’t Care
- I don't really have an opinion on it since it has not greatly affected my attendance at NDSU games home or away.
- I am not interested in sports or drinking as a hobby. All of this nonsense does not make this world a better place to live in. I think the ethics of this stinks. We're spending too much time making the world revolve around this.