

Memorandum

Date: 10/15/2008

To: Interim Chancellor Jan Simek

Cc: James Bemiller, Ashley Blamey, Jeff Chapman, John Currie, Laura Nasheda, David Patterson, Dan Reilly, August Washington, Jeff Wilcox

From: David Patterson – UT Alcohol on Campus Task Force Chair

RE: Recommendation of Alcohol on Campus Task Force

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The UT Alcohol on Campus Task Force met on October 8 to review the proposals concerning the sale of beer at Thompson Boling Arena at non-athletic events. The proposal options listed below address the issue of beer sales at Thompson Boling Arena only. The Chancellor's sanctioning alcohol distribution sites on campus for university-sponsored events is not addressed here. As the possibility that the consumption of alcohol by faculty and staff attending events at these sites may constitute a violation of the HR Code of Conduct, the Task Force will still need to address this issue.

The Task Force voted on the two options below:

1. Propose no sale of beer at Thompson Boling Arena due to existing policies (standards of conduct for students) prohibiting the possession and consumption of alcohol on campus.
2. Propose beer sales to generate revenue to offset Thompson Boling Arena's deficit, recognizing that standards of conduct for students would need to be changed by the procedure provided by UT General Counsel Mizel.

Discussion of the positions of the task force members preceded voting on the recommendations. Included in the discussion were various points of view:

1. Mixed messages are sent to the students and the community concerning the position of the University of Tennessee on distribution and consumption on campus of alcohol.
2. The code of conduct needs to be changed to recognize that the legal age for alcohol consumption is 21 years of age. With this recognition must come a statement of responsible drinking and the venues where this may take place. Dorm rooms would be inappropriate because of

the ability to supply underage consumers. At controlled venues such as receptions, legal age students in attendance should be permitted to consume alcohol.

3. The Arena beer sales would occur in a controlled venue. To forbid UT students who are 21 or older from purchasing beer and allow all others of age to purchase, seems to be a real contradiction. It is time that we address the realities of a "dry campus." Inherent in the vote for proposition 2 is that this will be done as part of permitting beer sales in the Arena.
4. Support of beer sales at Thompson Boling arena and revision of the standards of conduct for students creates the potential for further expansion of beer sales on campus.
5. There is an inherent "disconnect" between the proposed sale of beer at Thompson Boling and the present policies of the student code of conduct.
6. The proposal of beer sales at Thompson Boling arena is inconsistent with the best available research on college drinking and associated negative consequences. Specifically, the NIAAA Task Force on College Drinking (<http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/>), the most complete and rigorous collection of studies of alcohol use on college campuses, suggests that alcohol availability is the best predictor of negative outcomes. This collection of studies indicate that as campuses increase availability the most likely result is an increase in negative effects for students and community members.
7. By attempting to profit from beer sales at Thompson Boling, UT will be sending intoxicated individuals onto either the streets of the surrounding community or the campus. Both portend deleterious consequences for the reputation of the University, the health and safety of our students and the community.
8. The requisite alteration of the standards of student conduct necessitated by adoption of the proposal to sale beer at Thompson Boling may place UT in an unfavorable light with the state legislature given its passage this year of legislation mandating reporting episodes of underage drinking to parents.

The results of the vote are as follows:

Two SGA members were present, who represented one vote for SGA.

One Task Force member voted in absentia.

1. In favor of proposal 2 – 5 votes
2. Opposed to proposal 2 – 3 votes

3. The measure to recommend proposal 2 was passed.

The Task Force will reconvene at a future date to make recommendations concerning the student code of conduct and the faculty/staff policies. A full report from the Task Force will follow.

cfr/cfr