



Student Life Office

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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Dr. Kara L. Ostlund, and I currently serve as the Dean of Students and Interim Title IX Coordinator at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse (UWL). Within my role as Dean of Students at UWL, I oversee the Student Life Office which houses Advocacy & Empowerment, Second Year Experience, Student Conduct, Violence Prevention, and Wellness & Health Advocacy.

My office often interacts with individuals who have been negatively impacted by alcohol. When a student is hospitalized and misses class, Advocacy & Empowerment sends instructor notification so that instructors can work with students regarding missed assignments. Student Conduct works with students who have violated policies and state laws to help them reflect on their choices, and values so that they can make more informed decisions in the future and become more responsible citizens within our communities. Violence Prevention works with individuals who have been sexually assaulted by intoxicated individuals. Wellness & Health Advocacy provides prevention education with the hopes education our students so that they make healthy decisions should they choose to engage in underage consumption. Wellness & Health Advocacy also provides alcohol education and referrals to students who have been found responsible for alcohol violations.

Depending on case load, I assist with adjudicating conduct cases. As part of my conversations with students, I ask them to tell me about what took place the night in question, prior to their interaction with law enforcement. While I do not know the exact number, I estimate that about 98% of the students we meet with are honest with us; perhaps a little too honest with us at times. I ask them questions about the amount of alcohol they consumed if they could recall. If they have gone out, I ask them about where they have gone and how they got there. I talk about the usage of fake IDs. I talk with them about their values and how their decision-making fits or does not fit within their values. I talk with them about their friends and how to turn them down or redirect the conversation. I talk with them about their major and how this may impact their future career. We also talk about how their guardians may respond and how to approach the topic prior to any guardian notification.

Over the past few years, I have seen an increase in the number of students I have worked with who have shared that they have consumed alcohol while underage at Latino's Bar. The students have shared that they love to go to Latino's because they know that the "alcohol is cheap," they know they can "get sloshed," it "doesn't get busted," "no one cares," and "you don't even need an ID." Thursday is apparently the best night to go.

One of the most shocking conversations I can recall having with a student is the one who shared that because they knew the bouncer working, they didn't even have to show their ID to get inside. When I asked them what they meant, they shared that all they did was show their debit/credit card that had their name on it is that it looked like they were looking at something. Then, they were just let in. I was shocked.

When I was asked to write a letter of the impact of Latino's on our students, I jumped at the occasion. With the risk that Latino's provides to our students with the disregard of liquor laws, overserving our students, failure to ask for proper identification and properly checking identification that is presented, I believe that Latino's is a harm to our community, especially the college-aged population. Part of my role as Dean of Students is to identify harm reduction strategies as it pertains to drugs and alcohol. I firmly believe that taking away Latino's liquor license is a great harm reduction strategy to keep our UWL and larger community safe.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Respectfully,

Dr. Kara L. Ostlund
Dean of Students and Interim Title IX Coordinator
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