

CRIME

Drug, liquor citations saw rise in 2010

By Travis Bickham | Staff

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UC Berkeley experienced a spike in the number of liquor- and drug-related incidents resulting in police action in 2010 compared to 2009, according to UCPD's annual campus safety report.

The campus, campus-owned buildings and the surrounding public area — marked by Virginia Avenue to the north, Dwight Way to the south, Shattuck Avenue on the west, with the eastern border running into campus — saw 2,006 arrests or instances of disciplinary action in 2010 relating to liquor or drug use, compared to 1,921 in the previous year, according to the report released last month.

Karen Hughes, coordinator for [PartySafe@Cal](#), a program launched by University Health Services to reduce the occurrence of harmful drinking, said the increased number of incidents may be a reflection of the campus's commitment to crack down on these kinds of violations.

"Students are a priority. Where laws are upheld, there are less negative consequences," Hughes said. "This is one aspect of problem reduction strategy, not the whole thing. Nationally, alcohol is an underlying factor for 27 percent of students who drop out or have to take time off of school." Hughes added that upholding alcohol policy and laws is an important aspect of reducing risk to students.

Some are hesitant to get completely behind the push, such as Edith Bretado, 2009 graduate and a bartender at the Bear's Lair Pub.

"I think on one hand it'll be a good thing because it keeps people from doing anything dumb or getting behind the wheel," Bretado said. "But if they are just trying to create problems when you're partying safe, then it's unwarranted." This year, between move-in day in August and Labor Day, 14 incidents occurred in which UC Berkeley students had to be rushed to the hospital for alcohol-related issues, according to UCPD Lt. Marc DeCoulode. That number is twice the amount as last year during the same time period.

All 14 — 13 of whom were students — required medical attention due to excessive intoxication, and with the exception of two, all were under the age of 21.

Although UCPD does not typically initiate criminal proceedings for alcohol intoxication calls, they forward the cases to the Center for Student Conduct and Community Standards, meaning students could still face consequences on campus.

UC policy prohibits student drinking that impairs "work performance, scholarly activities, or student life," and those in violation "may be subject to corrective action, up to and including dismissal." The UCPD, Berkeley Police Department and the Office of Student Conduct work together on weekly enforcement activities, according to Hughes.

"Research shows that college communities which conduct fair, consistent and sustained alcohol enforcement experience reductions in student intoxication levels — the primary factor in negative alcohol consequences," she said.