

Theory, Mechanisms of Behavior Change, and the Effectiveness of Interventions for Drinking Among College Students

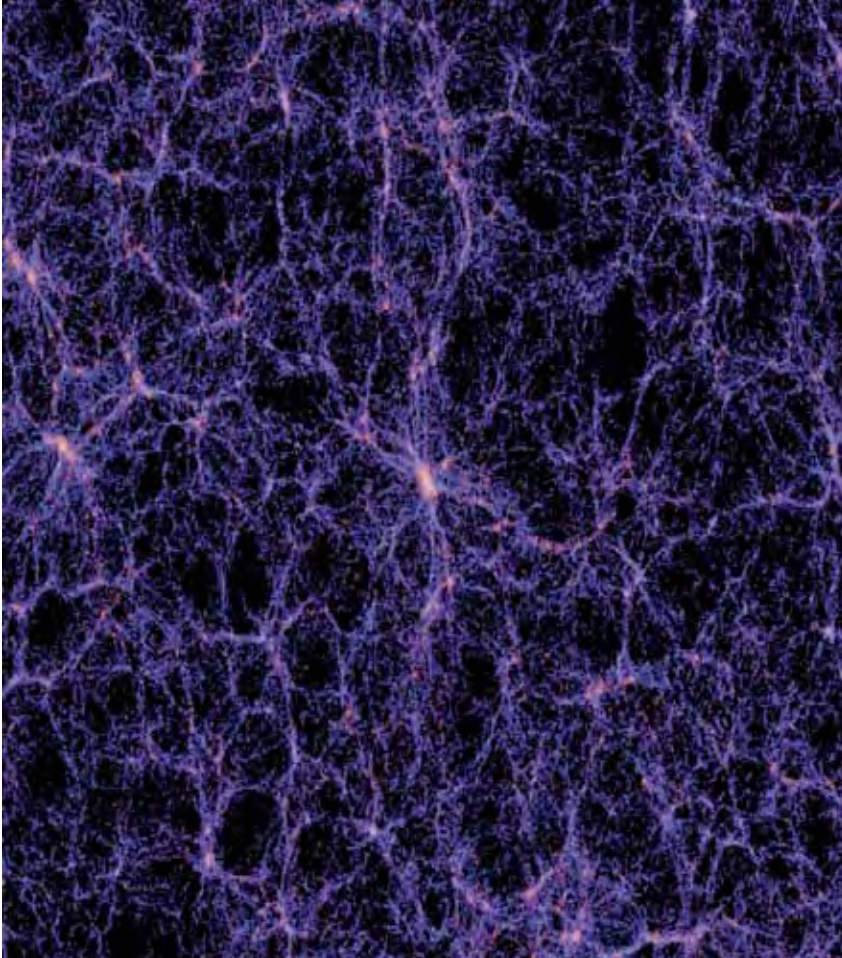
Mark Prince, MA

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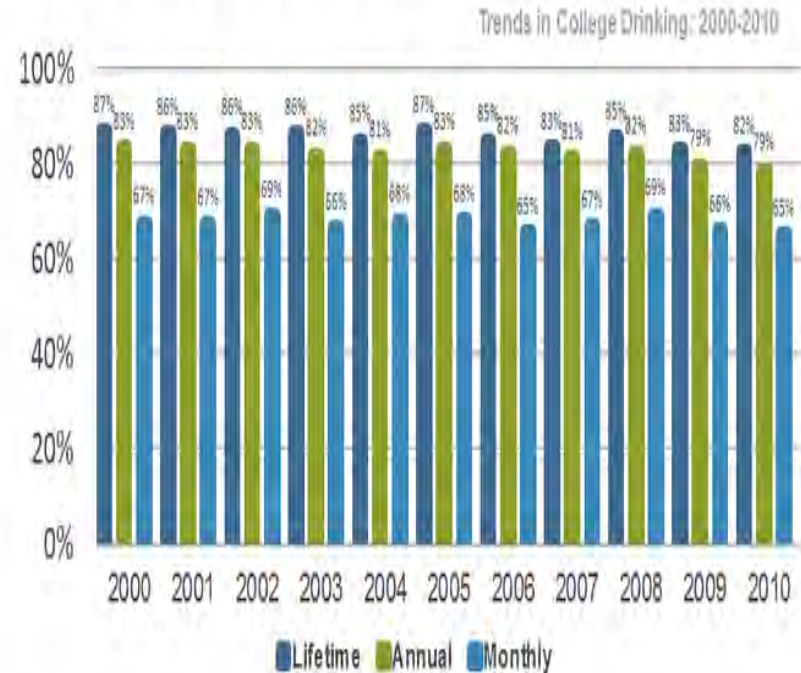
Syracuse University

This is a presentation about
scale.

The Visible Universe: The Problem of College Drinking

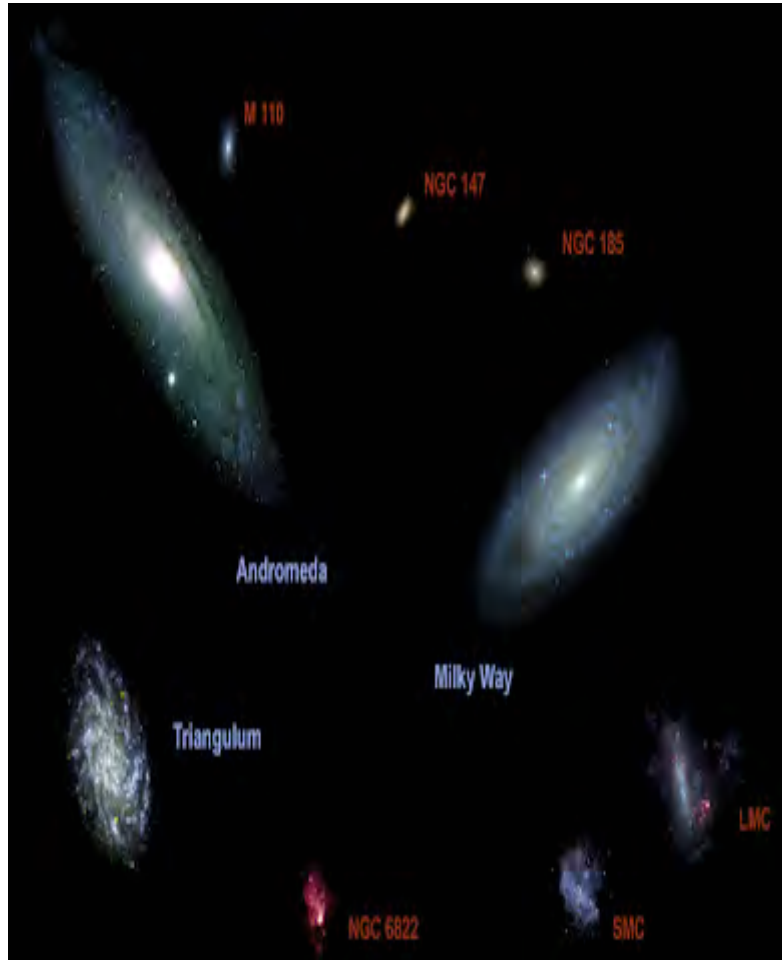


Alcohol consumption among college students over the past decade has remained relatively unchanged.

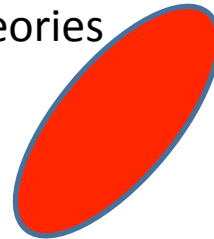


Source: NIDA, *National Survey Results on Drug Use from the Monitoring The Future Study*, Vol. II Johnston L., et al, U. of Michigan, 2011

The Local Group of Galaxies: Theories Applied to College Drinking



Developmental
Theories



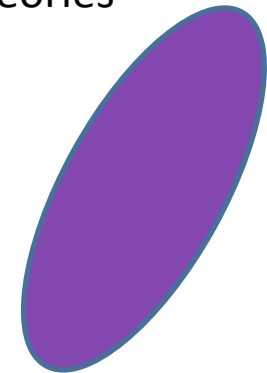
Personality
Theories



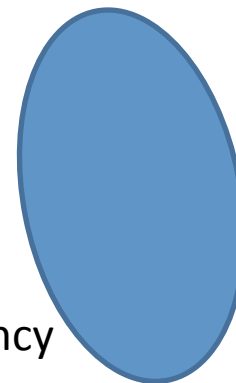
Behavioral
Economics



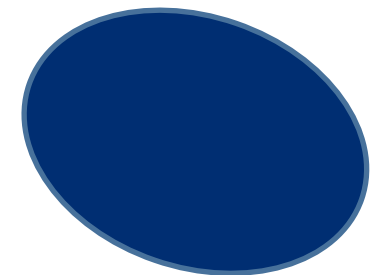
Social Theories
(Norms)



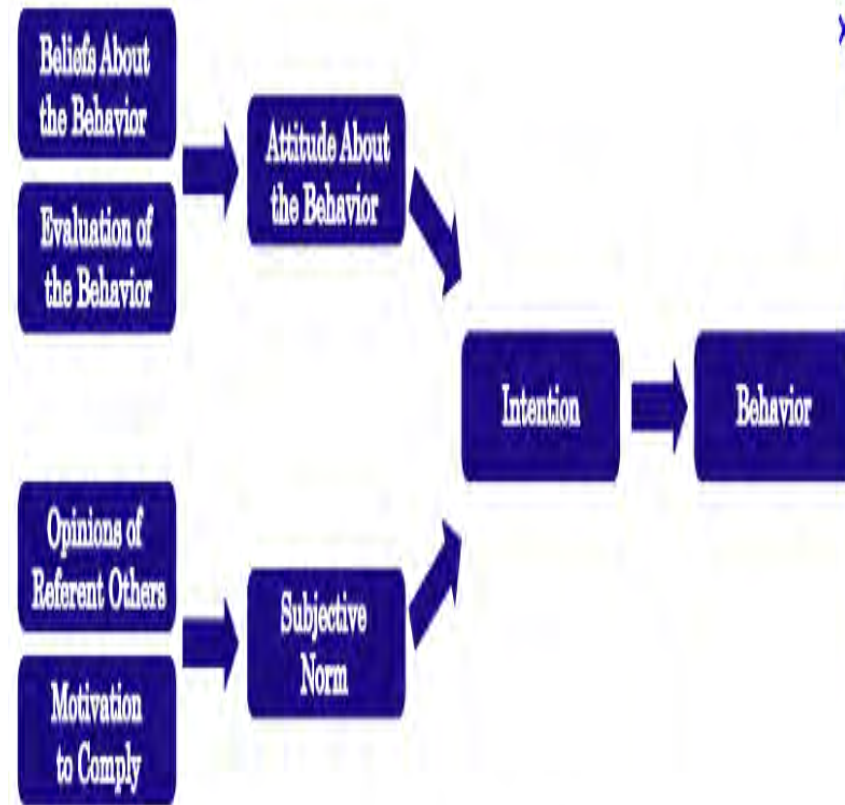
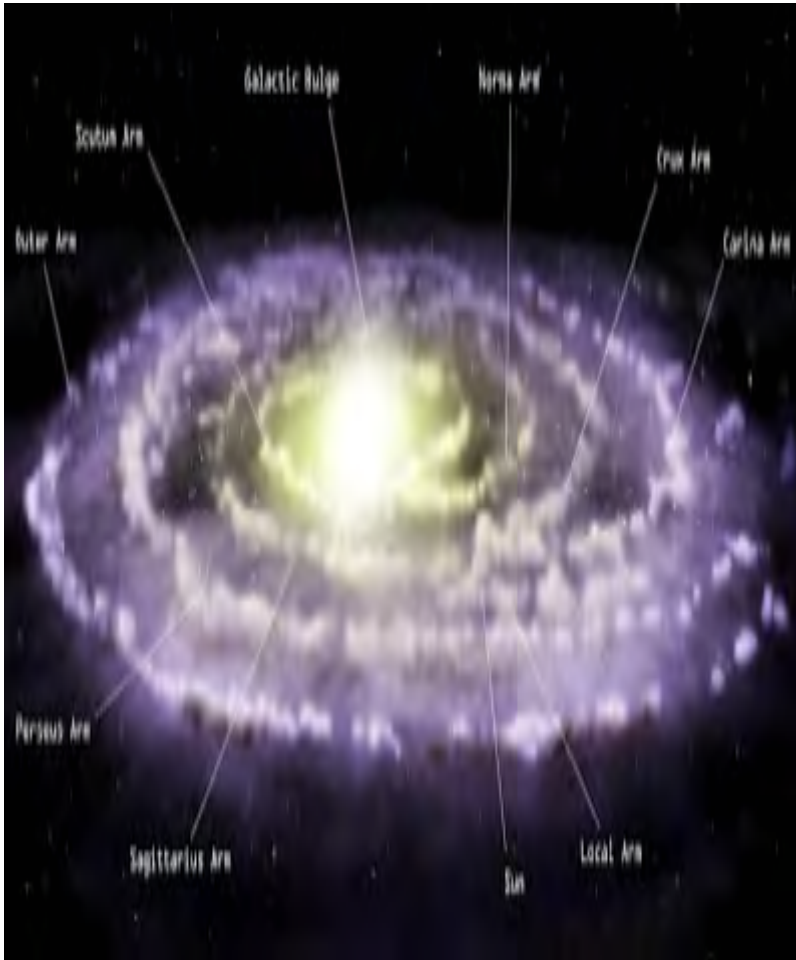
Expectancy
Theories



Motivational
Theories

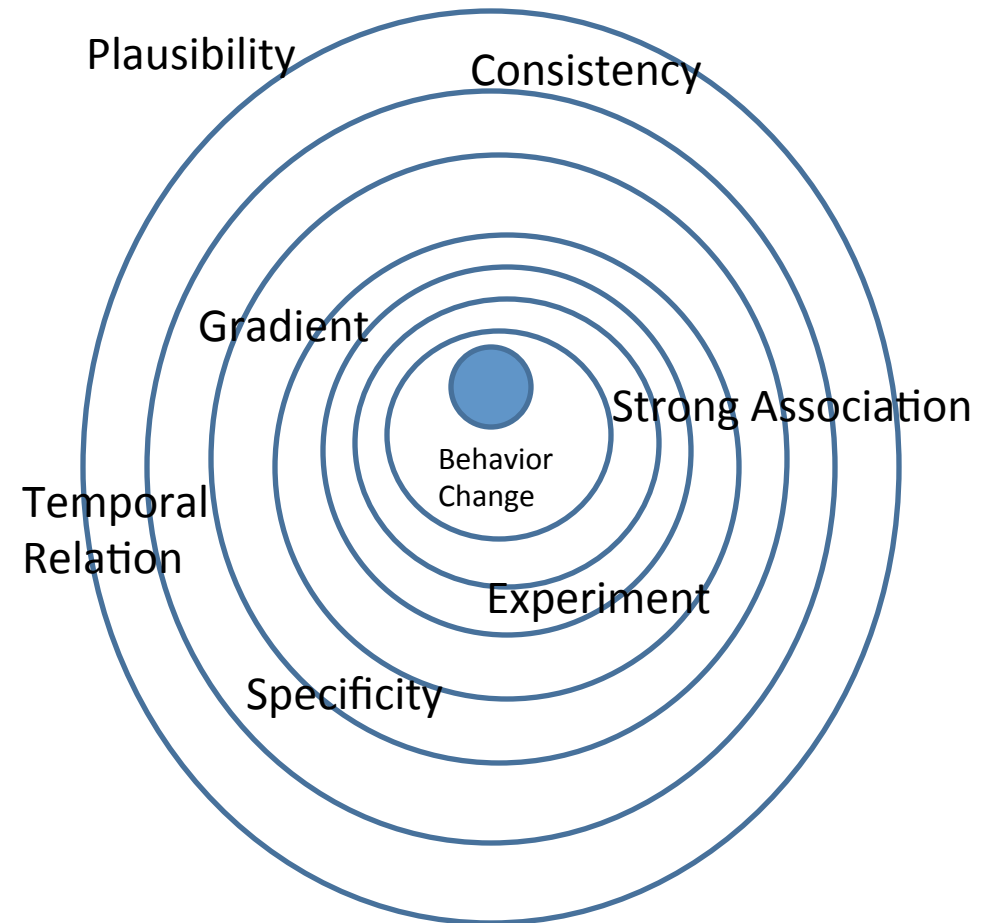
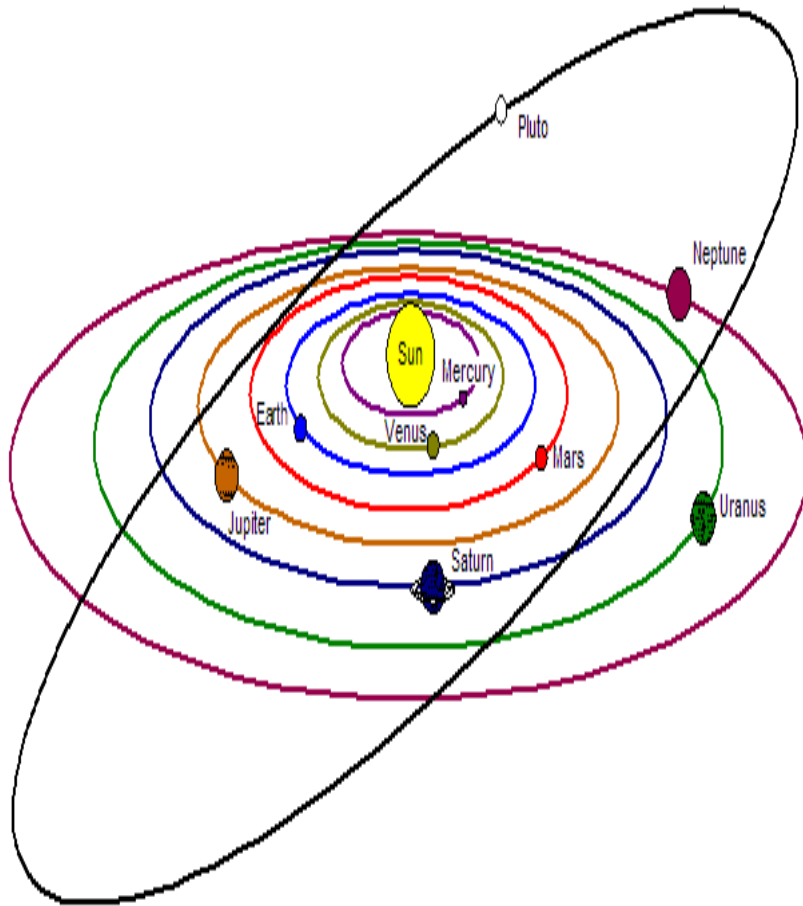


The Milky Way: A Single Theory



Fishbein-Ajzen Theory of Reasoned Action

Solar System: Mechanisms of Behavior Change

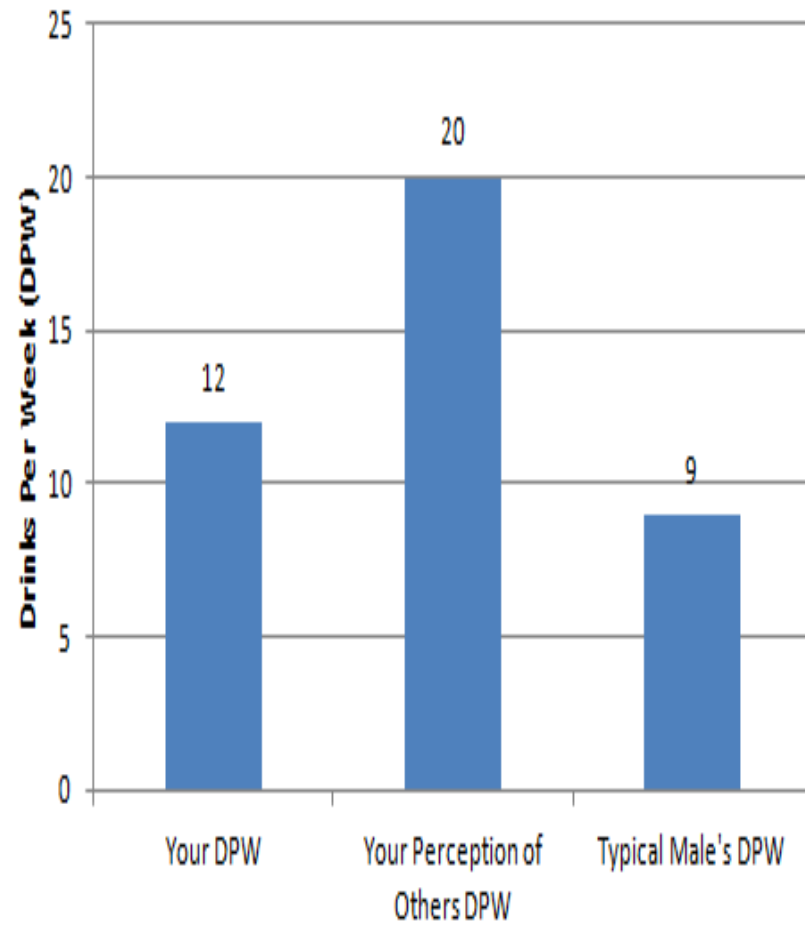


Earth: A Single Construct



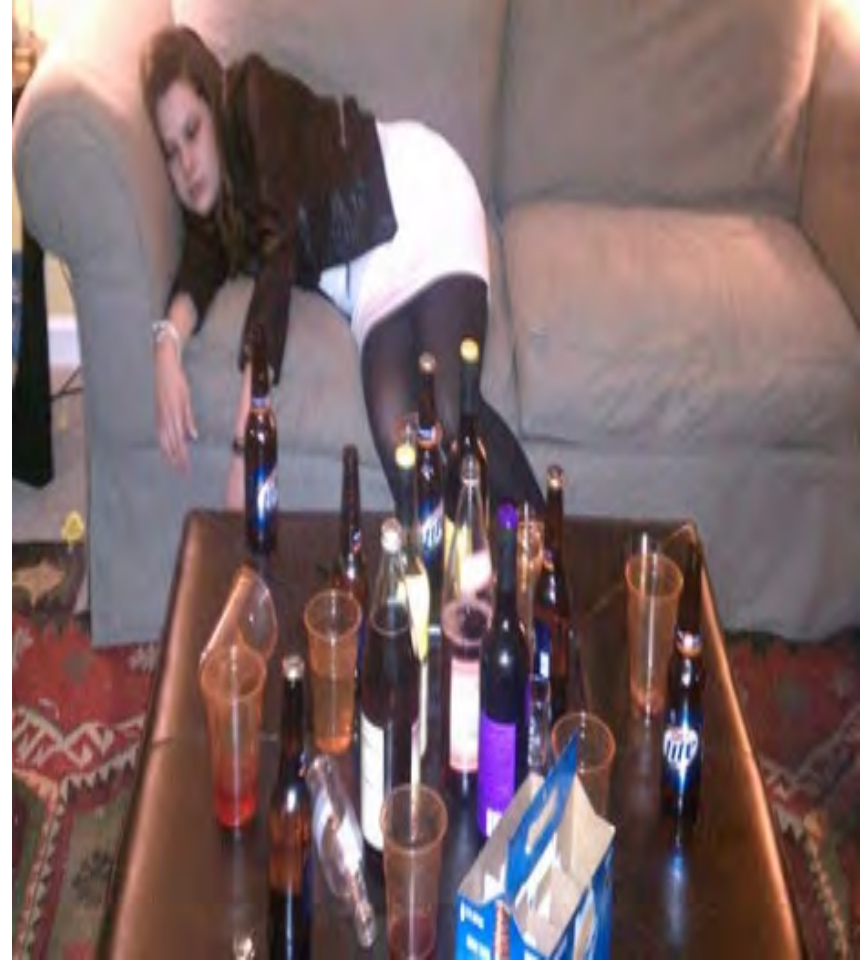
N
SOCIAL
R
M
S

Buffalo: A Piece of a Construct



Descriptive Norms Feedback

A College Student: An Individual's Choices



Effectiveness



Mars Rover Self-Portrait

- How good of a job are we doing?
 - What great strides have we made?
 - What directions should we move in?
- The proof is in the dirt

Assessment of the Effectiveness of Interventions

- A number of review papers and meta-analyses have provided a synopsis of literature on alcohol interventions delivered to college students
 - Individual-focused college drinking prevention (Larimer & Cronce, 2007)
 - Individual-level alcohol interventions at first post intervention assessment (Scott-Sheldon et al., 2009)
 - Individual-Level interventions with up to 6-month follow-ups (Carey et al., 2007)
 - Computer-delivered interventions (Carey et al., 2009)
 - Expectancy Challenge Interventions for college drinking (Scott-Sheldon et al., 2012)
 - Feedback Interventions for College Drinkers (Walters & Neighbors, 2005)

Summary of Intervention Efficacy

- Nearly all forms of alcohol interventions for college students can initiate change in drinking behavior.
 - Reductions in
 - alcohol use
 - alcohol-related consequences
 - positive expectancies
 - Increases in
 - protective behavioral strategies
 - knowledge about alcohol
 - Desired Changes in
 - Attitudes
 - normative perceptions
- However,
 - Across interventions changes are small to moderate (average $d = .2$)
 - Behavior changes are short-lived
 - Peak within 6 weeks and differences between control and intervention conditions wear off around 6 months to a year

Summary Continues

- Most powerful interventions
 - Skills based interventions
 - Particularly face-to-face interventions are more powerful than computerized or mailed interventions
 - Strong support for brief-MI with personalized feedback,
 - Can be delivered individually, in groups, and with or without an interventionist
 - Normative feedback
 - Changes perception most with a PNF
 - reduced drinking and/or consequences

Applying Interventions in Scale

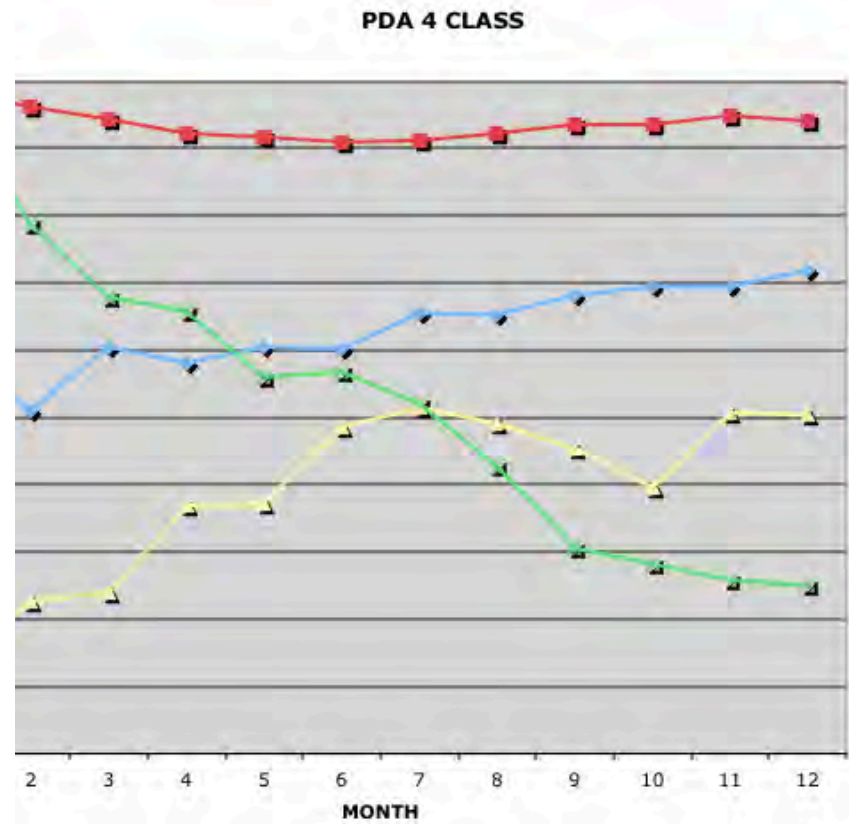
- Large Scale – campus wide
 - Computerized interventions
 - Shown to be more effective than assessment only controls in reducing alcohol consumption and problems in the short and long term
 - Easy and cost-effective to distribute to entire campuses of students
- Small Scale – individual students
 - Personalized interventions
 - Shown to be more powerful than computerized interventions
 - Produce greater reductions in alcohol use and consequences and greater increases in protective behaviors

College Drinking is not a Single Entity

Heterogeneity

- Big picture aggregates of college drinking
 - Present stable patterns of heavy alcohol consumption and problems
 - With more advanced methods we can see that there are sub-classes of college drinkers that have unique characteristics

Growth Mixture Model



Future Directions

- Increase studies of mechanisms
 - Need more thorough tests addressing all criteria
 - Some promising initial work has looked at the psychological processes that underlie the observed behavior changes including:
 - Actual-ideal discrepancy
 - Negative-self-focused affect
 - Normative perceptions
- Develop theories and interventions to facilitate maintenance of current short term gains
- Pay attention to issues of heterogeneity and scale in our research and intervention efforts

Thank You