

## ABCT 2020 Script

### RESIDENCE, COLLEGE ALCOHOL BELIEFS, AND ALCOHOL USE AMONG COLLEGE DRINKERS

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Frequency of alcohol use increases from entry into college through graduation and college alcohol beliefs, which are beliefs that drinking is part of the college experience, have a strong positive association with alcohol outcomes. Research has also shown that expectations about drinking in college are more salient for freshmen who live on campus. However, living off-campus, specifically without parents, is a risk factor for more frequent alcohol consumption. The purpose of this study was to determine the associations between year in college, residence status, college alcohol beliefs, and several alcohol use outcomes. I examined a moderated mediation model where college alcohol beliefs mediated the association between year-in-school and alcohol use outcomes. Specifically, I thought the association between year-in-school and college alcohol beliefs may be different for those who live on campus versus off. This model can be seen on the left-hand bottom corner of the poster.

Participants were 427 undergraduate students. The sample was fairly diverse, with 38.9% identifying as White and 56.0% identifying as Black. Slightly more participants lived on campus versus off campus. Participants who lived with family off-campus were excluded from the analysis, due to low endorsement. You can see on the poster that we had pretty good representation across all years in school. Data are from a large intervention study, but I just focused on the baseline survey for this presentation. College alcohol beliefs were measured using the College Life Alcohol Salience Scale in which participants rate their agreement with 15 items such as "Parties with alcohol are an integral part of college life." Our outcome measures consisted of frequency of drinking, number of drinks per drinking day and typical estimated BAC. Separate moderated mediation models were conducted for each alcohol outcome using Mplus version 8 where residence was included as a moderator of the association between year in school and college alcohol beliefs scores, which was path a. Gender was controlled for in all models.

Moderated mediation results showed that among those living off-campus, juniors reported significantly higher college alcohol beliefs than freshmen, which in turn was associated with greater consumption for all three alcohol outcomes, controlling for participant gender. In other words, compared to freshman, juniors who lived off campus reported higher beliefs that alcohol is an important part of the college experience, and in turn reported greater alcohol use. We did not see this same pattern for year in school among students living on campus. Further research should examine if this is associated with many students turning 21 years old during their junior year, which could increase access to alcohol, especially for those living off campus. In conclusion, advancing through years in school may be a protective factor for those living on-campus but a risk factor for those living off-campus. Interventions should focus on addressing college alcohol beliefs, particularly for those later in their college career if they live off-campus.

## References

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