Scams On College Students Becoming Common

College is a time for students to learn how to write papers and balance time. But college can be a time where unscrupulous people can scam and trick students out of time and money. This fraud can add money and headaches to the already rocketing costs and other pressures of being a college student. Yet by applying the same principles of research and study to your life as you do to your learning, you can spot and avoid the pitfalls. College scams come in many forms, from identity theft, to magazine subscriptions to modeling scams. Below are listed some of the more common scams and ways to avoid them.

Student Identity Theft
This is by far the biggest category of college scams. As heavy Internet users, sometimes too trusting of others, young people are particularly vulnerable to identity theft scams. This happens especially on social networks like Facebook, where scammers have set up phony pages that look like official college pages, harvesting names either for ID theft or to be sold on marketing lead lists. Never give out any personal information of yours to sites or people you do not know.

Scholarship Scams
There are tens of thousands of legitimate scholarships on offer out there. So many, in fact, it's hard to know where to start. But dishonest scholarships have two main scams themes. The first is the Phony scholarship that either does not exist or are so small as to be hardly worth applying for. The aim is to harvest personal details of applicants for ID theft or marketing purposes. The other scam is charging a fee for scholarship search matching. This isn't illegal but it's totally unnecessary since scholarship information is available free online.

Phony Student Employment
Someone stops you at the mall and says you could be a model. People have always said you're good looking, and the idea of a glamorous career is hard to resist. But when you show up for a follow-up appointment, you find yourself in an office with other hopefuls. Once you finally get your turn, you find out that what you thought was a job interview with a modeling or talent agency is really a high-pressure sales pitch for modeling or acting classes, screen tests, or photo shoots that can range in price from several hundred to several thousand dollars. The scam is that you have to use a specific photographer or pay a fee to serve as your agent before they'll do any work on your behalf. Promises of free photo shoots or paid trips to New York City should raise eyebrows. Scam artists may send you a fake check leading you to believe it's an advance payment for the photo shoot. They may also ask you to wire money to what you think is a photographer, studio or booking agent. Wiring money is never a good idea in these scenarios.

Magazine Subscription Scam
College aged "salespeople" go to the residence areas and try to sell magazine subscriptions to win "a scholarship for school." They seem nice enough, but they tell you a pack of lies to rip you off. If students refuse to buy a magazine, they're often asked to fill out a survey and pick their top three magazines. After doing so, some students have found they've been billed for over a hundred dollars in magazine charges. An impulse purchase could leave you with years of monthly payments for magazines you may not want or could buy for less elsewhere.

A reminder: SOLICITORS ARE NEVER ALLOWED on university property without proper authorization by the Office of Business Affairs. If you are unsure if a solicitor on campus is authorized, call the university police at 210.458.4242. We will send an officer to the location to determine if the solicitor has the proper permission from the university. If you think you've been involved in any kind of scam listed above, contact UTSA Police Department. We can help you file a police report if that is needed or give you crime prevention information on how to avoid scams. You can also file a complaint or get information on consumer issues by visiting ftc.gov.

References: scambusters.org, Website of the Federal Trade Commission, University California—Irvine, and KOMO (Seattle) news

Be Smart...Be Safe
Protect yourself from scams
Photo: Google Images
Be Smart...Be Safe: Spring Break Safety Tips

Property Safety
- Take as few valuables with you on your trip as possible.
- Always lock your hotel room door.
- Watch out for scam artists who try to rip off students.
- If your cell phone or credit cards are stolen, report this immediately to the companies so they can cancel your service.

Physical Safety
- Always stay in the proximity of at least one friend, and preferably two or three. Adhere strictly to this "buddy system" and do not leave with someone other than your buddies.
- Do not leave with strangers, even if it seems like a good idea at the time. Always err on the side of caution and trust your instincts.
- Watch your drink very carefully! Be aware of "date rape" drugs that people may try to sneak into your drink. Never accept a drink from a stranger or let someone else hold your drink.
- Never go to an isolated place with a stranger or someone you do not fully trust.
- Carry a cell phone with you in case of an emergency.
- Carry your identification and important medical information on your person in case of an emergency.

Alcohol Safety
- If you're going to drink during Spring Break, it's very important that you take precautions. Drunk college students are seen as a target, so do not underestimate the way to take these reasonable precautions.
- Binge drinking gets students into trouble the most. The safest approach is to not binge drink and to know your limits with alcohol.
- Make sure you know the signs and symptoms of alcohol poisoning.
- Do not drink and drive, ever.
- Remember, you must be 21 years old to drink alcohol.

Additional Precautions
- Use common sense when it comes to sun exposure. Always use sunscreen with at least an SPF of 15 or higher.
- Use common sense when it comes to swimming and water safety. Never swim alone, and avoid swimming when no lifeguard is present.
- Drink lots of water! Don't rely on alcoholic or carbonated beverages to quench your thirst.

Employee Kudos: Recently Officer Veronica Rangel stepped up and got on the MICROPHONE when the 3rd shift needed a dispatcher. Officer Rangel, a former dispatcher now police officer, drove from the DTC and assumed all dispatch duties when she needed to fill in for emergency reasons. Nice job Veronica. Way to go!

Watch for Drowsy Driving This Spring Break

Sleepiness and driving is a dangerous combination. Most people are aware of the dangers of drinking and driving but don't realize that drowsy driving can be just as fatal. Like alcohol, sleepiness slows reaction time, decreases awareness, impairs judgment and increases your risk of crashing. Falling asleep at the wheel is known as the "silent killer" because it is under reported as the cause of fatal traffic crashes. There is no accurate test to determine the level of sleepiness like there is to determine.

In Texas, a reported 256 drivers were involved in fatal wrecks in which fatigue or falling asleep at the wheel was the cause of the crash. Another 4,558 drivers were involved in injury wrecks and a total of 7,711 drivers were involved in property damage wrecks in which they were fatigued or asleep. Males and young adults ages 18 to 29 are at the highest risk for drowsy driving. A typical crash related to sleepiness has one or more of the following characteristics:

- Crash is likely to be serious
- A single vehicle leaves the road
- The crash occurs on a high speed road like a highway
- The driver does not attempt to avoid a crash
- The driver is alone in the vehicle

To avoid a drowsy driving accident, follow these tips:
- Get adequate sleep; about 7-9 hours a night
- Schedule proper breaks; about every 2 hours
- Avoid alcohol and sedating medications
- Stop driving; find a safe place to sleep for the night

Caffeine -- does it help?
Caffeine promotes short-term alertness. It takes about 30 minutes for caffeine to begin working so the best thing to do is pull over for a coffee or other caffeinated beverage, take a break and then get back on the road. The equivalent of 2 cups of coffee can increase alertness for several hours. Keep in mind that caffeine won't have much of an effect on people who consume it regularly.

Watch for drowsy driving. A number of fatal accidents have occurred with drowsy drivers.

Simply put, a tired driver is a dangerous driver. Just like driving drunk or drugged, drowsy driving causes you to make mistakes behind the wheel — mistakes that can injure or kill the driver, passengers or total strangers.

Reference: DPS Website, admatards.com, drowsydriving.org

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UTSA Office of Business Affairs: Your Partner for Successful Solutions!
Alcohol and Spring Break: TABC Press Release

TABC enforcement agents at retail locations located along the major highways and corridors throughout the state. With Spring Break just around the corner, this is just one of several efforts being taken by the TABC to ensure public safety during this holiday event.

The minor stings will be conducted at both on-premise (bars and restaurants) and off-premise (grocery stores and convenience stores) retail locations. A minor with a youthful appearance and under the supervision of the TABC enforcement agents, will attempt to purchase alcoholic beverages during the minor sting operations. Retail employees that sell to the minor will be issued a criminal citation and the retail location will have an administrative charge filed against them.

In March of 2012, Cameron County and Nueces County, both major Spring Break destinations in Texas, had over 50 alcohol-involved crashes. Two of those incidents were fatal crashes.

The TABC compliance auditors will be distributing educational materials to assist retail owners and managers when discussing underage drinking and other alcohol related issues, such as over-consumption, with their employees. The TABC also provides free educational training on the responsible service of alcoholic beverages for retail locations. To request training, retail locations can contact their local TABC office or send an email to education@tabc.state.tx.us.

Sale to a minor is a Class A Misdemeanor with fines up to $4,000 and/or up to one year in jail. The retail location can also be issued a fine or have their permit suspended or canceled.

Created in 1935, the TABC is the state agency responsible for regulating and supervising all phases of the alcoholic beverage industry in Texas. To report a violation of the Alcoholic Beverage Code, call toll free 1-888-THE-TABC (1-888-843-8222). Reference: TABC Press Release Feb. 2013

ALL ACCESS: The Key to Securing the Campus by Jessina Skelton (Director, Security Services)

The Access Services Department oversees all access for UTSA buildings, offices and teaching spaces. These areas are strictly controlled to ensure that only authorized UTSA affiliates are issued keys and electronic card access. Our goal is to ensure the safety and security of people and property on this campus. By restricting access, we limit the number of people who can access controlled spaces and keep unwanted visitors out. Access control is also very important for preventing theft. The Access Services Department can help determine what best practices should be followed and provide assistance to determine how access should be controlled. This helps departments make better decisions about who needs key and card access to their spaces.

All keys and card access are controlled in accordance with UTSA HOP 8.04 Keys & Card Access to University Facilities. As members of UTSA, we each have a duty to adhere to the policies and procedures in place so that we can maintain a secure campus. There are many policies out there and it can be difficult to remember them all. To help you remember, I noted a few rules to follow:

- All requests for key or card access must be approved by your department head and submitted by your departments authorized requestor.
- Do not transfer or share keys, access cards or pin numbers. Appropriate requests must be submitted even upon replacement of a position by a new employee.
- Persons other than the employee to whom the key is issued will not be allowed to pick up keys.
- A valid photo ID is required when picking up keys.
- Report all lost keys and access cards to UTSA Police Department immediately. This will allow us to establish a plan of action and determine if an area needs to be rekeyed or a card needs to be deactivated.
- Keys should not be used to open doors with card readers.
- Use access cards for buildings that are locked during the holiday breaks or when the building is closed.
- Departments should conduct audits of access to their spaces yearly.

Lastly, immediately report any suspicious activity or unauthorized personnel in controlled areas to the UTSA Police department. By following these simple rules you will help mitigate risks and help keep access controlled.
Welcome to UTSA Police Department!

UTSAPD welcomes the follow new Public Safety Officers: Ricky Damiano, Thomas Buso, Leonardo Casiano, Kaitlin Fegely, Denise Fuentes, Isaiah Garcia and Troy Simchak.

Welcome aboard!

Safety Highlights Lorenzo D. Sanchez, MPA (UTSA Director of Emergency Management)

With the click of a button, you can shop online, make dinner reservations at your favorite restaurant, or conduct all your banking needs among the countless ventures the World Wide Web provides. The internet today has become an invaluable resource in both our personal and professional lives. However, as technology advances, so do the techniques cyber-criminals use to gain access to our computer networks and personal information. If each of us becomes more aware of cyber-security risks and implements a few simple steps, we can all make a big difference.

Below find tips from the United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT) on how to protect your personal information online.

Be careful supplying personal information - Unless you trust a site, don’t give your address, passwords, or financial information. Look for indications that the site uses SSL to encrypt your information (such as the ‘s’ in ‘https’). Limit cookies - To make sure that other sites are not collecting personal information about you without your knowledge, choose to only allow cookies for the web site you are visiting and block or limit cookies from a third-party. If you are using a public computer, you should make sure that cookies are disabled.

Do not use your primary email address in online submissions - Submitting your email address could result in spam. If you do not want your primary email account flooded with unwanted messages, consider opening an additional email account for use online.

Avoid using debit cards for online purchases - Credit cards usually offer some protection against identity theft and may limit the monetary amount you will be responsible for paying.

Devote one credit card to online purchases - Consider opening a credit card account for use only online. Keep a minimum credit line on the account to limit the amount of charges an attacker can accumulate.

Cyber-security is a shared responsibility and we are all called on to ACT or Achieve Cyber-security Together. Be Prepared, Make a Plan, Stay Informed – Be ready UTSA!

(source: DHS - www.dhs.gov/stayinconnect)

Be a Responsible Roadrunner has these Spring Break Safety Tips:

• Remember, impairment begins with the first drink. Choose not to drink if you are driving, or be safe with a designated driver.
• Wear your seatbelt. Always. It’s your best protection in a crash.
• Distracted driving is dangerous. Park the car to check mobile devices.
• Respect other peoples’ right, and your own, to choose not to drink.
• Respect state laws and campus policies.
• Stay out of dangerous situations involving alcohol, whether in a car, bar or bedroom.
• If a friend drinks to the point of passing out, alcohol poisoning is a real danger. If you’re concerned, seek medical attention. Better safe than sorry!

Detective Time by Sgt. Thomas Calucci (Supervisor, Criminal Investigations)

When a serious crime occurs on campus, the UTSAPD investigative team will respond to ensure that the scene is processed. Our ultimate goal of working (or processing) a crime scene is to hold an offender accountable for their actions. This cannot be done unless physical evidence is recovered which places the offender at the scene of the crime.

So how is this done? First, the first responding officers will respond to the scene and determine if a crime has been committed. Next, they will secure the scene and not allow anyone inside the area. This is where you will see the yellow crime scene tape all over the place. The officers will identify possible witnesses or suspects and separate them.

When the investigative team arrives, we will begin by documenting our actions and making observations about the scene. We will then conduct a scene assessment to determine the level of investigation needed. We will do a walkthrough of the scene to prioritize the collection of evidence. Then we will document and record the scene, usually with pictures, video, and a drawing. We will then locate, collect, preserve, inventory, and package any recovered evidence.

If this sounds easy, it’s not. There are many criminal cases which have been dismissed because of poor police work at the scene of the crime. UTSAPD investigators receive specialized training as well as follow federal guidelines on how to manage a crime scene to ensure that we can provide the best service.
**Schedule of Events For March 2013**

**Wednesday Mar. 6, 2013**  
**FS 351: Community Repose to Active Shooter**  
3:30 pm at Main Campus  
Learn strategies for surviving an active shooter situation.

**Mar. 11 to 15, 2012**  
**Spring Break**  
Have a fun and safe spring break!

**Thursday Mar. 21, 2013**  
**Coffee with the Cops**  
Begins 6:00 am at UC Starbucks  
The UTSA PD Crime Prevention Unit will be at the UC Starbucks. Come have some coffee with us!

**Friday Mar. 29, 2013**  
**UCinema Night: The Hobbit**  
Begins 7:00 am at UC 2.02.02  
Come to movie night at the Retama Auditorium. Movies brought to you UC Programming.

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**Lost and Found**

All found property that is turned in to the University Police Lost & Found section is stored at the University Police Lost & Found for 60 days. After 60 days, the found property is transferred to the Surplus Property Department for public auctions or further disposition.

To report lost property items or to make inquiries regarding lost property call 210.458.6247 (Monday to Friday; 8am to 5pm).

To claim found property items, individuals must present a valid Texas Driver’s license, UTSA photo ID card or a valid photo ID card from another source; military ID or another state photo ID card. Individuals must be able to accurately describe the property that was lost in order to claim property from the lost & found section. **NOTE—Departments, please promptly turn in any lost and found items you may have so we can return them to their owners in a timely fashion.**

The below listed items are currently being held by UTSAPD. If not claimed in 30 days, they will be disposed of in accordance with policy.

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**Crime Report for the Month of February 2012**

The below is a summary of the crimes that occurred as of last month. For more information, go to www.utsa.edu/utsapd and click on Crime Stats.

- **Thefts** = 10
- **Alcohol Arrests** = 6
- **Burglary of Vehicle** = 0
- **Drug Arrests** = 23
- **Assaults** = 0
- **DUI/DUI Arrests** = 3
- **Theft of Motor Vehicle** = 0
- **Other Crimes** = 8
Some folks think 21 was pulled out of the air. But despite what you may think, there are some pretty good reasons that age 21 was selected.

Back in the late 1960’s and early 70’s a number of states lowered their drinking age from 21 to 18. In many of these states, research documented a significant increase in highway deaths of the teens affected by these laws. So, in the early 1980’s a movement began to raise the drinking age back to 21. After the law changed back to 21, many of the states were monitored to check the difference in highway fatalities. Researchers found that teenage deaths in fatal car crashes dropped considerably - in some cases up to 29% - when the laws were moved back to 21.

Like it or not, it is clear that more young people were killed on the highways when the drinking age was 18. Back in 1982 when many of the states had minimum drinking ages of 18, 55% of all fatal crashes involving youth drivers involved alcohol. Since then, the alcohol-related traffic fatality rate has been cut in half! Research estimates that from 1975-2002 more than 21,000 lives have been saved. Hard to argue with that!

So in answer to the question "Why?" the 21 minimum age drinking laws were established to save your life.

Reference: Mothers Against Drunk Drivers website at http://www.madd.org/under21/4847 & medicalnewstoday.com

There is more to the story on why the drinking age is 21.
Photo: UTSA Today

Are you wondering what the deal is with the 21 minimum drinking age law? Sure, it’s a law but it doesn’t always feel like it. It's in all 50 states but do people pay attention to it? Here's a lowdown on the most relevant information.

**Why is the Drinking Age 21?**

**Chief Barrera Says:**
My thanks go out to Officers Michael Crist, Bill Rowsey, James Lee, PSOs Matt Schorn, Cordell Robinson, and Troy Simchak for a Hazmat incident that they responded to involving a potentially dangerous chemical at the MEMS Lab. The teamwork demonstrated was excellent!

**BARR Safe Spring Break Pledge**

Are you ready to take the pledge? By reading the following and sharing your pledge on Twitter, you agree to Make the Break Safe!

- I promise not to drink and drive during Spring Break, or let any of my friends get behind the wheel impaired.
- I will not ride in a car when the driver has been drinking.
- I will wear my seatbelt, whether I’m the driver or passenger.
- I will focus on my driving when behind the wheel and not be distracted by mobile devices, music or passengers.
- I will watch out for my friends, take care of myself, and do what I can to plan for a Safe Spring Break!

Tell your friends and followers you took the pledge on Twitter! @UTSABARR

**The Bottom Line by Chief Steve Barrera**

With spring break fast approaching you will notice in this issue that we spend a lot of time emphasizing spring break safety tips. We always like to remind our students that their safety comes first and we want to see everyone back safe and sound after the break. Recently, in San Antonio, we have seen an increase in fatal accidents involving young drivers. So, whether you’re going out of town or staying local during this spring break, make sure you practice safe, defensive driving. It goes without saying that you should never drink alcohol and drive or get into a vehicle being driven by someone who has been drinking, but it’s also important to control your speed and never engage in racing. Speed is a major factor in many accidents so don’t be in a hurry. It’s better to arrive late and safe than to rush and get into an accident. You probably hear these kinds of tips a lot, but we really do care about your safety on and off campus and hope you do too. Remember to play it safe during spring break!