

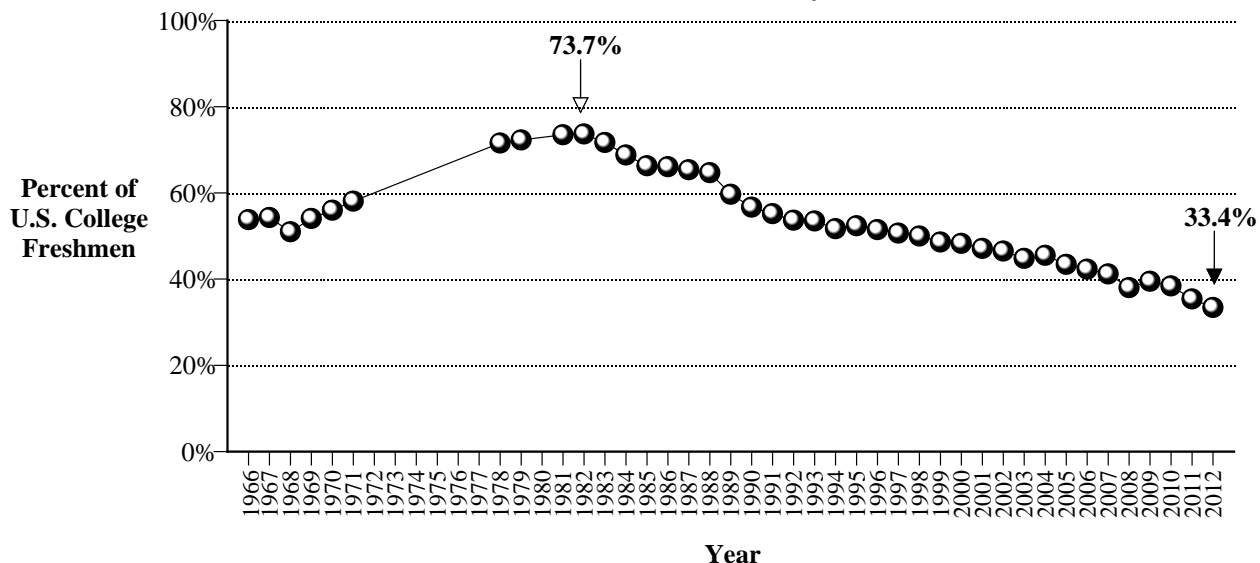
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

## *Percentage of College Freshmen Drinking Beer in the Past Year Continues to Decline*

The percentage of U.S. college freshmen reporting that they drank beer occasionally or frequently in the past year has declined significantly since the early 1980s, according to data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program's annual college freshman survey. In 1982, 73.7% of college freshmen reported drinking beer in the year before entering college. Since then this rate has declined nearly every year, reaching a record low of 33.4% in 2012. While the decline in beer consumption over the past three decades is encouraging, one-third of college freshmen still report drinking beer in the year before entering college. Research has shown that early alcohol use—particularly before the age of 18—is associated with a higher risk of alcohol abuse or dependence as an adult (see *CESAR FAX*, Volume 21, Issue 34).

**Percentage of U.S. College Freshmen Reporting Occasional or Frequent Beer Use in the Year Prior to the Survey, 1966-2012\***



\*The question about beer use was not asked in the 1972 to 1977 and 1980 year surveys.

NOTES: The 2012 results are based on the responses of 192,912 first-time, full-time, freshmen at 283 U.S. baccalaureate colleges and universities. The survey is typically administered during the freshmen orientation process. The data have been statistically adjusted to reflect the responses of the approximately 1.5 million first-time, full-time students entering 1,613 four-year college and universities as first-year students in 2012.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI), Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), *The Freshman Survey*. Available online at <http://heri.ucla.edu/tfsPublications.php>. For additional information, contact the Higher Education Research Institute at [heri@ucla.edu](mailto:heri@ucla.edu).