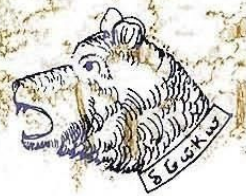


Order of the Golden Bear



The Usual Place, October 25, 2016

The topic of tonight's discussion was campus accessibility and the state of the University's services and programs for disabled students.

Many Fellows were concerned with the fact that the Disabled Students Program (DSP) has been out of compliance. A Fellow mentioned that there are at least 800 students with a variety of disabilities which for some even crossing some of the bridges is dangerous. Other Fellows brought up the role of invisible disabilities. One Fellow wanted to understand what DSP does for students with psychiatric disabilities and whether they are providing appropriate resources. Another Fellow added that about 10% of the entire student population has either a visible or invisible illness but many students do not feel comfortable disclosing their disabilities. This Fellow added that this was more apparent in the graduate student population. This Fellow acknowledged that there are many long time staff members that are no longer a part of DSP. Fellows emphasized the importance of having veteran staff in the development of a good program.

There was a Fellow that provided context to the current situation regarding DSP. This Fellow highlighted that the previous director joined about six years ago when DSP was serving 600-700 students. This Fellow added that DSP now serves over 1000 students and that the raise in students has not been reflected with the staff. This Fellow mentioned that a year ago the program lost two specialists which was due to budgetary cuts. This Fellow also shared that for the past 40 years there has been portions of funding that were once covered by the campus that are now converted to external grants.

The conversion of funds to grant was a concern for many Fellows. One Fellow discussed a scenario where grants could disappear and then the program go be unfunded because there would not be a way to replace these funds.

In order to provide insight into the history of the disability rights movement, a Fellow shared the story of Ed Roberts. This Fellow spoke to the impact that Roberts had with independent living and with the development of a residence program. This Fellow emphasized that it is these accommodations that brings people to Cal. Another Fellow raised a concerns regarding attendants not showing up to assist students. This Fellow tied this issue with students not wanting to make others uncomfortable and therefore end up not disclosing their disabilities. Another Fellow added that in recent years there has been a decrease in students with mobility issues possibly due to the program being out of compliance and/or increased competition in admissions.

In addition to physical disability accommodations, the a large portion of DSP is responsible for providing testing accommodations, proctoring services, and the alternative media center. Many Fellows also urged faculty to be sensitive and understanding when a student requests these services. Another Fellow shined a light on the proctoring service being heavily impacted and has led to students not being able

A few Fellows then discussed a DSP led career program that will now be handed off to the Career Center. A Fellow mentioned this being due to the restructuring of DSP and to lack of funding from central campus. Other Fellows suggested organizing a group of students, alumni, parents, and possibly even disability rights lawyers to develop a recruitment and retention center. Another Fellow suggested that this could also inspire the faculty and admissions office to keep this in mind when reading applications. Fellows also asked for there to be a change in how faculty are trained to understand students with disabilities and to further build relations with graduate students.