



The Usual Place, October 24, 2017

Campus Leadership Transitions

The Fellows discussed the recent changes in campus leadership and the stability or instability it presents to campus community members.

Some Fellows inquired as to how the recent large amount of transition in upper campus leadership affects student life. Additionally, what should the campus look for in prospective administrators?

Other Fellows expressed the desire that leadership must have the University at heart. People with exclusive business experience is not enough. Additionally, other Fellows remarked that campus leadership does not reflect the make-up of the state demographically. Fellows thought that the relative lack of representation for minorities at upper leadership should be improved.

Fellows wondered how experiencing a large amount of 'interim' administrators affects students. Others questions whether deans or vice-chancellors directly impact students at all.

Fellows were reminded that leadership at the highest levels is very important for the long run, and that students may only see things more immediately affecting student life. It takes leaders who are committed for the long run to achieve big things. Expanding housing, building new structures, creating new centers for innovation or new academic programs, all affect students and take many years to achieve. A lot of turnover hurts momentum and the degree to which we can accomplish these things on an efficient timeline.

Some Fellows felt that it is beneficial to have a mix of campus experience across administrators. They feel it is beneficial for administrators to have external experience but to also have spent time here in order to know the culture and history unique to the University.

Competition with peer institutions and private schools will require our people to really align with our values and belief in public mission.

Fellows proposed that it is important to acknowledge that turnover largely offers negligible impact on students. They wondered if the lack of impact was a symptom or contributor to the problem of campus shared identity. If students don't feel the impact of administrators or deans in their everyday life, what does that say about the overall campus community? Should investment in student life be a priority for all administrators regardless of formal role?

Fellows pointed out that previous administrators' decisions still affect the current new administration. These include financial decisions.

Other Fellows remarked about how the Law School has had 9 changes in dean leadership in 5 years. This rapid transition requires that interim functions should really act like they are not interim. Sometimes for staff, frequent change-over in administration feels like the leadership is bailing out. Staff then can feel abandoned, or

that they can't get things done. In many cases, they actually can't get anything done. This issue needs to be considered in anticipating complications from frequent turnover.

Fellows wondered why brilliant people still come here despite the high cost of living and lower pay and this frequent change in leadership. The only reason people can navigate through difficult times is by keeping the Berkeley spirit going. Leadership in deans, faculty, and other administrative positions need to all do this.

Fellows mentioned the role of ladder faculty and the academic senate's role in campus leadership. Fellows lamented how they have very little student input. Some fellows believe that while they continuously lead it in a good direction, it's getting to the point where student issues like homelessness and food insecurity are affecting student academics, and the faculty senate should broaden their perspective and definition of academic issues.

Fellows also discussed the role of outgoing leadership. Fellows remarked that people about to become interim administrators sometimes shadow an outgoing administrator for a couple months which helps smooth the transition. Haas, Engineering, and CNR deans are all announcing early on they are leaving at the end of the year. That gives us lots of time for dean searches and their ability to smooth the process. Fellows concluded that it's very hard when the change is abrupt.

