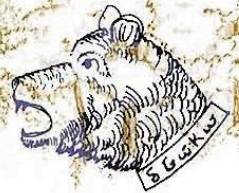


Order of the Golden Bear



The discussion tonight dealt generally with the issue of sexual assault at the University, including current climate, perceptions, stigma, preventative measures, and support for survivors, among other aspects. Fellows noted the timeliness of this topic in relation to the visible ASUC campaign in support of the right of consent, the sexual assault task force announced by President Obama, as well as the campus's own audit of its sexual assault policies.

To begin, Fellows pointed out the current issues present at the University in regards to sexual assault, including: undefined terms, lack of student awareness of rights, and difficulty in navigating the bureaucracy of the campus. Fellows stated that there is a need for someone to be hired to help navigate survivors of sexual assault through campus entities such as Tang, UCPD, and the Title IX office in an efficient and supportive manner, as opposed to being left to one's own devices. Fellows cited the current two Title IX coordinators that exist for the entire campus community in handling these cases, emphasizing the need for additional personnel to adequately handle the case load.

In examining other solutions in the handling and prevention of sexual assault incidents, some Fellows cited experience at other universities where a specific office exists to train groups of students in dormitories and freshman seminars in peer-to-peer training, emphasizing every person's role as an 'empowered bystander.' Other Fellows cited efforts already underway in improving these policies, as policy recommendations have been submitted to the Regents to revise the audit policy, and to address the issue of Title IX offices hiding sexual assault incidents for the sake of the reputation of the University.

The problem of mindset and the present societal attitude was brought up by numerous Fellows, pointing out many causes including the relative lack of females in positions of leadership in our society as leading to perceived gender inequality, as well as the absence of sexual assault education within sex-ed seminar within the K-12 education system. In considering practical solutions students could initiate here at the University to these problems of attitude and perception, Fellows suggested bringing the entire greek system together for public discourse, as opposed to simply reducing the issue to a once a semester discussion. The American Cultures requirement was brought up to suggest a possible avenue of institutionalizing such ethical education regarding sexual assault and intercommunity respect, etc. ("Facing You, Facing Me" being one example of such

education) into a required University course for credit, such as the AC requirement. Fellows stated this would be a method to insure widespread student engagement, citing academics as the largest shared priority among all students.

In considering solution methods in a more concrete manner, Fellows brought up the question of the ‘information distribution channels’ at our disposal as members of the University community. On the one hand, going through University and administrative channels such as CalSO’s, orientations, and seminars, there would be some sort of standardization of the message, but at the cost of perhaps being received as impersonal if coming from some unknown University administrator. On the other hand, using student connections to spread awareness of the issue through student organizations and communities could be more impactful and relatable between peers, yet such a message would be more difficult to standardize and control.

A thought provoking point was made when a Fellow suggested engaging with alumni and the CAA in addressing this issue of sexual assault on campus. Instead of UC asking alumni for donations to ‘keep UC great,’ some Fellows suggested it should instead ask for donations in order to fix current problems which UC faces. Fellows were encouraged to feel free to act as constituents of one in going out into their communities and spreading awareness of this very pressing issue in order to stimulate widespread engagement, and to not assume that “someone else” is already dealing with it.

Fellows also engaged in discussion concerning how sexual assault is viewed more generally. Fellows were reminded that survivors of sexual assault are not only women, but also men and the elderly more broadly. The former, perhaps receiving increased stigma regarding sexual assault as a result of the culture of manhood and masculinity in our society. Along the same line, Fellows suggested that while UC prides itself on “academic excellence” and “athletic excellence,” why not equally focus on “ethical excellence” and commit resources and energy in ensuring the wellbeing and quality of life for the students and the entire UC community.