

# Order of The Golden Bear

διδάκτωρ

ESTABLISHED 1900

## **Virtual Meeting November 10, 2020**

The meeting was convened at 6:00 pm.

### **Items for the Good of the Order:**

The Warden reviewed updated protocols for this semester's meetings due to these unique circumstances.

### **Items for the Good of the University: Viability of Student Organizations in Higher Education**

Prior to the meeting, the Warden prepared a set of questions and resources for the Fellowship to inform our conversation of the topic:

*On the topic of Viability of Student Organizations in Higher Education, here are some questions to consider:*

- How has COVID affected both the participation and financial well-being of clubs and student organizations on campus?
- Student organizations, like the Daily Cal, play a large role in keeping the students, faculty, and community informed on major campus issues. What are the effects if the Daily Cal is no longer financially viable? Would any groups be able to fill this hole?
- What can be done to support student groups during this time? What can organizations do to maintain member engagement?
- Can student organizations play a larger role in providing community at Cal even with their own obstacles during these times?

After a brief introduction from the Warden, the floor was open for the Fellowship for discussion:

- A Fellow mentions that they attended an event for the Cal Band, and they were surprised at how well they have been able to sustain during this time



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- A Fellow brings up that many of the groups that have been discussed are well-established on campus, a perennial source of community for new students
  - The Fellow mentions that Residence Halls also serve as a great place to foster community
  - However, in the current situation, most dorms are single rooms with everything spaced out, and they are unsure if community is still being fostered
- A Fellow notes that they have checked in with the Student Environmental Resource Center, and updates that there has been a good amount of engagement and people are still accomplishing much within these spaces
  - There are more options for students to participate in many different ways and organizations
- A Fellow emphasizes that the leadership and innovation shown by Cal Students and Leaders in these organizations is commendable
  - They are working and innovating to maintain engagement, and their efforts should not go unnoticed
  - There are challenges that distance learning and online classes that continue to plague in regards to experiences outside the classroom
  - It is hard to help people feel like they have a home and they are making significant contributions to their organizations
  - How will smaller, less-established organizations recover and continue the spirit of the campus
- A Fellow bounces off a previous speaker's comments regarding observing how other institutions with primarily remote learning keep up student engagement and involvement
  - Ask the question: How do you keep students engaged when they are remote almost 100% of the time
  - Think positively in the sense that there is much room for improvement based on what has been observed during this time
  - Could there be opportunities to help students reduce financial costs by taking portions of degree programs online at a lesser cost?
    - Could certain lower/upper division courses be transferred to an online format to lower costs for students (option)
- A Fellow notes that the Senior Class Council has approached a partnership with Alumni to work on helping seniors replicating their senior year

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- A Fellow addresses the concept of shifting courses online, and notes that there is a certain level of maturity that helps make online courses move more smoothly
  - There is better engagement when you have students who want to be there versus those that have to be there to fulfill requirements
  - Breadth courses are places where students can learn more about particular majors, and taking these courses in person could lead to better engagement
- A Fellow notes that future students are more likely to be better prepared for distance learning than the current generation
  - The Fellow also postulates that the quality of education, especially for the University of California, has not significantly declined
  - There is a case for quality education at the UC level as we move into the future with remote learning still in play
- A Fellow brings up the equality of online education, they mention that they don't necessarily feel part of the in-person campus community, but the quality of the courses was still comparable to in-person courses
  - If there is a hybrid mix of in-person and online courses, it could look like a commuter school, where people don't necessarily live near campus
  - Compartmentalizing helps makes the campus feel smaller and create more spaces for students to form community
- A Fellow notes that the Daily Cal is a very important part of the campus community since it provides insight about activities going on around campus, as well as provides training and skills that are not necessarily taught in the classroom
  - The Daily Cal tried to distance themselves from the ASUC in order to be more political and independent about what they can publish
- A Fellow suggests that the Daily Cal should look for ways to partner with other organizations in order to possibly survive
- A Fellow notes that the Seniors should feel like the administration has their back during these tough times, specifically in regards to graduation and other senior activities
  - Celebrate the Seniors the way they deserve to be celebrated

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- A Fellow suggests that the Daily Cal could source contract work from larger Papers in order to generate revenue if they are pressed for finances at this time
- A Fellow Highlights again that the Campus should continue to find ways to create that sense of Community
- A Fellow emphasizes the importance and value of a Student-Run Newspaper, as it will capture the atmosphere of the campus as observed by students

The meeting closed with song and was adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Meeting Minutes taken and compiled by the Chronicler for the Order.