

September 13, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Topic: How do we make Berkeley feel smaller?

Meeting Called to Order: 6:06PM

Items for the Good of the Order:

- The Warden reminds the Fellowship of the upcoming Arleigh Williams Forum happening on September 23rd. Fellow Rich Lyons will be talking about the Berkeley Changemaker Program.
- The Warden reminds the fellowship about the Order Council Meeting happening next Tuesday, September 20th.

Items for the Good of the University: How do we make Berkeley feel smaller?

The Warden opens the floor with anecdotes and reviews questions sent out to the Fellowship prior to the meeting.

On the Topic of: How do we make Berkeley feel smaller?

- A fellow opens the conversation by asserting the crucial role that campus safety plays in ensuring that students feel secure and integrated within the campus.
 - This fellow gives the example of BearWalk, a largely student-run operation, organized by Community Service Officers through UCPD.
 - It's crucial for such resources to be made known to new students on campus. Walking home at night may be a deterrence in staying late on campus to study in the library or staying late to participate in campus activities.
 - Often, there are protest groups or people that go onto campus and spread hateful ideas that can be alienating towards certain students and make them feel less safe and welcomed on campus.
- A fellow reflects on their experience at Cal and asserts the important role that student campus organizations and events play in helping students find their community at Cal.
 - From the extracurricular side, the ASUC maintains a list of active student organizations and recalls Calapalooza being a great event where students can find their group on campus.
 - From the academic side, department or events calendars should be made more publicly available to the general student body. These events are an incredible opportunity for students with similar interests to meet.
- A fellow asserts that resources are segmented and can be overwhelming to navigate for a student and poses questions about the distribution of information:
 - The fellow reflects on their experience with GBO and that it was an information overload. There wasn't enough time to fully absorb all the information. What other channels of information on campus resources are available to students when they step foot on this campus?
 - What role does the Golden Bear Orientation play in helping students feel integrated on campus?
- A fellow builds on a previous speaker's point about the segmentation of resources, and brings up a personal anecdote about navigating the entrepreneurship resources on campus.
 - There are more than a dozen groups on campus that offer resources on startups and entrepreneurship.
 - None of these resources communicate with each other and many have overlapping goals. Many groups start their own project under their department/organization. This fellow wonders if there can be more inter-departmental/organization collaboration.
- A fellow adds into the conversation about the role that alumni can play in making the campus feel smaller.

- When looking at our private counterparts, alumni's reach out to the students to provide career mentorship and support for navigating the university.
- Cal's alumni network is under utilized and There are many Cal alumni who are active and happy to talk to students.
- Organizations like the Cal Alumni Association can be used to connect students with alumni and foster one-on-one mentorship relationships.
- A fellow reflects on their experience of transferring to Berkeley during the online term
 - Club culture at Berkeley is a big problem. Although there are many clubs to choose from, most of them are incredibly competitive.
 - Many students experience getting rejected from many clubs that they apply to. Most clubs have an application and a multi-round interview process to determine membership.
- A fellow continues to build on over saturation of resources
 - People are overwhelmed with assignments, information. Hustle culture prevents students from living balanced lives and joining clubs.
- A fellow brings in student classroom experience into the conversation.
 - Large lectures with hundreds-thousands of students makes it incredibly hard to get attention and time from faculty, the classroom feels impersonal.
 - Issues with imposter syndrome which makes it difficult to branch out.
 - R1B with a significantly smaller class size (~20) made it easier to know the names of your classmates and is a great place to connect.
- A fellow builds on a previous fellow's comments regarding the Cal Alumni Association
 - Encourages other fellows to walk into Cal Alumni Association buildings and ask what they do there. There is an opportunity to have students connect with alumni that are in their hometown and build strong local networks.
 - It's important to get students in touch with people who have gone through Berkeley.
- A fellow continues on the topic of classroom experience from a faculty perspective.
 - Faculty can help engage students by organizing socials and creating structures in the classroom for students to connect with their peers.
- A fellow revisits the topic of mentorship as a means to make Berkeley feel small
 - There is a newly launched program by the Alumni association that matches students/alumni pairs as mentors/mentees. The athletic department has their own mentee/mentor program that matches athletes with grad students.
 - For a mentorship program to be successful, the matched pairs need to be specifically based on interest and background. There needs to be points of connection.
 - Many mentorship programs at Berkeley fail to reach the scale of the student populations. Can algorithm based matching potentially help with the scaling of mentorship programs?
- A fellow reviews the role that housing plays in the student experience.
 - Cohort based, themed Residential halls are an under-tapped opportunity to build community and make Berkeley feel smaller. Students live together based on common identity or interest and it makes it much easier to connect. The theme Program RA is a can be a great channel to distribute resources/information and can serve as an upperclassman mentor that share academic and career interest.
 - There are a total of 8 theme programs available in the residential halls and with scale. 1 is based on interest, and 7 are based on identity. Are there more opportunities to create interest based theme housing? For incoming students, Foothill is known as the Engineering residential hall and Clark Kerr is known as the "Greek" pipeline.
 - Ivy League Universities and Stanford use residential colleges to give students the experience of cohesiveness and intimacy of a small school. Many of these schools have multiple-year guaranteed housing. Berkeley has Bowles hall, Co-ops, and Greek Housing options.

- A fellow builds on the topic of Berkeley club culture.
 - The Consulting and technology clubs on campus are especially competitive.
 - This fall, an unnamed club had over 550 applications and accepted 15 people. The acceptance rate is around 3%. Clubs have trouble scaling membership due to limited resources in external projects and alumni mentorship. Accepting too many people would dilute the tight knit and add the overhead of maintaining a large organization.
- A fellow suggests the concept of general membership that is adopted in graduate school organizations.
- A fellow suggests using mandatory Berkeley student fees to get more funding for student organizations.
 - Mandatory student fees were raised to build the RSF and can be used in similar fashion to support student organizations.
- A fellow brings up the use of the Berkeley Mobile App as a singular point for resource and information distribution.
 - The ASUC turnover creates instability over the maintenance of the application. When the App became the campus' responsibility, every single department wanted to have their information app, which made the app cluttered and hard to use.
 - If App is maintained by student developers, there is the issue of maintaining App when student developers leave. When supported by campus staff, the app isn't as relevant to student experiences as many staff maintaining the app did not go to Berkeley as a student.

Discussion Adjourned at 7:30 PM.

The Meeting closed with Song, and notes were compiled by the Chronicler