

Order of The Golden Bear

ΕΙΡΗΝΗ

ESTABLISHED 1900

The meeting was convened at 6:05pm. Usual Place, September 30th, 2025

Items for the Good of the Order:

- A Fellow reminded everyone that the Order is still seeking to fill the role of Steward. The Fellow was able to fulfill the duties for this evening but will be unable to do so again. Please email the Warden if you are willing to volunteer for the position.
- A Fellow mentioned that the Arleigh Williams Forum is being held this coming Friday, October 3, from 11:30 PM - 12:30 PM. The forum will take place in the Maude Fife Room located in Wheeler Hall. The forum is open to the public, no registration is required.
- A Fellow reminded everyone to attend the Homecoming Rally on Friday at the Memorial Glade from 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM. All are welcome and the Rally Committee would appreciate it if people come out.

Items for the Good of the University: Revitalizing Third Spaces

- *Numerous on-campus third spaces are currently unavailable to students: Moffitt Library, Free Speech Cafe, the English Lounge in Wheeler Hall, and Common Grounds in Dwinelle.*
- *How can third spaces reflect and celebrate cultural, social, and historical identities of communities on campus? (e.g., LSRC or Free Speech Cafe).*
- *How can third spaces (e.g., Community Kitchens) become hubs for healthy and affordable food?*
- *How can we strengthen communal spaces and opportunities for students from different majors and backgrounds to meet and connect on campus?*
- *How can we identify parts of campus where additional seating (e.g., benches, shaded areas) could improve student comfort and community gathering?*
- *What opportunities exist to better utilize recreational spaces (e.g., tennis courts) as sites for both physical activity and community connection?*
- *How can we improve access to parking in a way that balances student, faculty, and community needs?*
- *What methods could we use to help students navigate around ongoing construction projects and still feel connected to campus spaces?*
- *How can physical campus planning (construction, signage, layout) be made more transparent and student-centered?*

The Warden opens the floor for discussion.

- A Fellow commented that the lounges in the Social Sciences Building should be included in the discussion of spaces unavailable to students. The Fellow explained that these lounges are frequently locked and unavailable to students because there is insufficient staffing. The Fellow noted that the Social Sciences Building houses many different departments and the lounges offer

the opportunity for students to interact with students across different fields of study. In addition to these spaces often being unavailable, the Fellow also mentioned that these spaces are not advertised to students, so many students do not know they exist.

- A Fellow stated that both the Multicultural Resource Center and Queer Alliance Resource Center have been advocating for increased access to third spaces for students on campus. Over the past four years it has become increasingly difficult to obtain these spaces because of funding issues. The Fellow claimed that the real issue in procuring communal space for students is sorting out how they would operate.
- A Fellow mentioned that communal spaces exist on campus but that they are often "gatekept" from students. The Fellow stated that Administration routinely cites security concerns and lack of staffing for why available areas are closed to students. The Fellow urged the importance for students to express their needs for increased access to spaces on campus.
- A Fellow acknowledged that while we do have some spaces on campus, such as the Transfer Center, these spaces are insufficient in size. The Transfer Center serves roughly 7,000 students on campus but only has around 50 seats. The Fellow also mentioned that the needs of commuting students are insufficiently addressed on campus.
- A Fellow stated that they believe the issue is not the existence of spaces but the staffing of them. The Fellow referenced the library in the bottom of the Philosophy Building as an example. They would prefer to study here more frequently but it operates with limited hours.
- A Fellow shared a recent experience that may offer a potential solution to the issue of limited space on campus. When walking to campus from the Downtown Berkeley BART station, the Fellow stopped at the new Marriott hotel on Center Street to finish some work in the lobby. They were surprised to find a large number of Cal students were gathered there. The Fellow suggested that perhaps the university could connect with private businesses such as the Marriott and formalize a partnership that would generate new student friendly spaces near campus.
- A Fellow stated that students do feel that there is a current lack of access to spaces on campus; however, the cause of this situation is not space itself but a result of poor planning. Administration has put the image of the school before the immediate needs of current students by focusing on being "number one." The Fellow shared that a student group they are in often looks for vacant classrooms to conduct meetings. Additionally, the Fellow described a firsthand experience in which their student group was made aware of a general assignment classroom that had been continuously vacant for two years. The group shared this with administration in hopes of gaining access to the vacant classroom but administration denied their request. As a result, the student group has been left to operate without adequate space and this has prohibited the group from serving all of its members—the classroom in question remains unused. Despite this, the Fellow emphasized that the largest space issue students face is in relation to RSF. For years the RSF has been unable to appropriately accommodate student needs, resulting in hour-long wait lines that are shameful to the university and contribute to an overall sense of negligence in regards to physical health of students. The Fellow suggested that areas such as the volleyball courts underneath the stadium and the basketball courts above RSF could be used to expand physical fitness spaces that are available to all students, not just athletes. The Fellow reiterated the urgency in which the RSF problem should be addressed, noting that they have spoken to hundreds of students who find it to be a pressing issue of student life. The Fellow then turned to the topic of food availability and suggested moving certain services such as the food pantry to Lower Sproul

so that students will have greater access. The Fellow also mentioned certain policies which hurt student access to food, such as flex dollars not rolling over between academic years. In conclusion, the Fellow asserted the importance of ensuring that students feel that their concerns are being heard by the university. Administration should actively advertise a desire for student input and feedback on important campus matters such as construction projects.

- A Fellow expressed curiosity about the power of petitions as a method for students to make administration aware of student sentiments. Administration may be more responsive to issues that have the documented interest of hundreds or thousands of students. The Fellow then asked fellows to share their experiences about the topic of “healthy” and “affordable” food being accessible to students as these two categories are often not compatible in the United States.
- A Fellow referenced a previous speaker and shared that the Berkeley Student Food Collective petitioned to become a part of the student union space last year but was rejected. The space is now a brewery. The Fellow then commented on the number of committees that are centralized in the ASUC that would be better dispersed across campus. The concentration of power inhibits students' ability to enact changes they need.
- A Fellow commented on the need for increased student parking. During their sophomore year, the Fellow could only obtain a parking pass for the Clark Kerr lot which they found to be completely unrealistic. They cited the seniority system for parking pass allocation as problematic. The Fellow also mentioned the issue of finding parking on game days for students. Additionally, the Fellow shared that their current parking spot in Foothill is often taken by concert goers at the Greek Theater, but Parking and Transit has told them that there is little they can do to address this problem as they do not have the resources for appropriate parking enforcement.
- A Fellow reiterated the issue of limited parking on campus. A possible and partial solution may be for the university to work with the city of Berkeley in order to secure city parking passes for students. The Fellow suggested that the university could work with the city to get students access to city parking passes. Though local residents might protest, the university is the heart of the city and students should have access to it.
- A Fellow shared their personal experience as a commuter student. They drive over an hour each day to and from the Richmond BART station where they park their car in order to take the train to campus. This is more reliable and cost effective than parking on campus. They wish that it was feasible for them to park on campus.
- A Fellow stated the importance for commuting students to file a cost of living adjustment so that they can access funds which may offset their added travel expenses.
- A Fellow commented on access to Zellerbach Hall, Pauley Ballroom, and the Greek Theatre being cost prohibitive for most student groups. We should look for ways to make these optimal spaces more affordable for student groups to perform and congregate.
- A Fellow mentioned that students often do not know where to look for information regarding buildings on campus. There should be education available to the public showing what is being constructed, why it is being constructed, and how to gain access to it. An example was provided of the new engineering building, which will house community rooms for engineering students to use. Interactive maps would be a good solution.
- A Fellow shared that they participate in cultural shows and have never been able to perform on campus because the costs for venues like Zellerbach Hall are too high. These costs extend beyond the day of rental and include staffing and rehearsal costs. The Fellow described how student

dance groups are forced to practice in parking garages and other unsatisfactory areas because they lack access to proper studio spaces. The Fellow suggested that people walk through Lower Sprout and observe how many different groups practice outdoors.

- A Fellow expressed a desire to better understand the process of reserving spaces on campus. They suggested that the University could implement something akin to a parking app so that the process is easy to navigate.
- A Fellow addressed a previous comment, noting that there are apps available, but they are not streamlined or centralized. They provided an example of the student led app that was used for Moffitt and did not function well. There is general confusion because each space uses a different platform for booking.
- A Fellow affirmed the comments made by a previous speaker regarding the difficulty in reserving spaces on campus. The Fellow shared they are currently having a difficult time setting up an organization on campus and gaining access to reservation systems—it is not only an issue of booking rooms, but having access to book rooms. The Fellow mentioned that the provided training on bCourses are outdated and suggested that every college have an online training or an advisor that students could talk to directly to familiarize themselves with becoming an RSO.
- A Fellow pointed out that students are already burdened enough with the realities of simply being a student. The onus should be on administration to look out for students needs, not on students to figure out these problems for administration. The Fellow emphasized that many students have spent their whole lives to get here and be a student, not to figure out how the University should do their job better.
- A Fellow claimed that the core underlying issue of students accessing resources is broken trust between students and administration. They shared an experience in which their student organizations space in Eshleman Hall and the Hearst cages was abruptly taken away. Students were not given proper notification nor the ability to express dissent; if administration cannot provide new spaces to students, administration should not be taking current spaces away. The Fellow then claimed that petitions are an ineffective way to make change because students are unwilling to sign petitions when they do not trust the administration; a reference was made to the recent release of 160 names to the federal government. This issue particularly affects student minority groups who feel that it is too risky to publicly speak up for their rights and needs. The Fellow then shared that Pauley Ballroom is currently \$3,200 to rent while the budget for the club they are in is only \$500 for the entire semester, illustrating the inaccessibility of spaces. Making spaces more available to students will increase the sense of community across the university. The Fellow then brought up the current lack of religious prayer sites, specifically that for the growing Muslim population on campus. Because administration does not provide adequate space, students are forced to consult third-party organizations. The Fellow also mentioned the lack of Halal food in student dining.
- A Fellow brought up the importance in addressing the needs of disabled students. They shared a story in which their friend decided to not transfer to the university because they felt that the campus was not accommodating.
- A Fellow responded to a previous comment made in regards to the Hearst cages. There are 92 spots in the Hearst cages and 1,200 recognized student organizations. It is extremely difficult for the ASUC to decide who has access to these spaces. They acknowledged that there is not enough space, so the issue is creating more space. The Fellow then addressed previous comments made

about Eshleman Hall which is also ran by ASUC. The Fellow explained that the reason there are no more club spaces in Eshleman is because there are too many clubs on campus. The intention in taking designated spaces away was to make the space more equitable to all clubs.

- A Fellow shared thanks for people being willing to share their personal experiences. The Fellow requested that Fellows provide possible solutions to the problems they face.
- A Fellow brought up the topic of petitions, stating that we should identify the topics which can be best addressed through petitions. The Fellow suggested that administration advertise for student input on campus projects. The Fellow mentioned Clark Kerr as a potential space which could be better utilized, stating that we should be looking to better utilize the spaces which exist on campus.
- A Fellow wished that all students could have all of their needs met. However, the Fellow cautioned that an attitude of "this is what they owe me, it should be like this or that" can be limiting. The Fellow encouraged the room to let go of the smaller picture and see the bigger picture. The Fellow stated that they do not recognize many administration faces in the room tonight but if they were, they would agree with the sentiments being shared. Administration is doing their best to look out for students and hope that this discussion encourages administration to take action.
- A Fellow mentioned how the practice of petitions could signal to administration what topics are most important to students. The Fellow noted that the people working on campus want to help students and need to be made aware of what students need, but also acknowledged that they have limited resources, especially with the current political climate.
- A Fellow emphasized the importance of feedback forms and urged others to always take the time to fill them out. This is one way that information makes its way to administration so that they can make better choices.
- A Fellow stated that The Order should separate issues into urgent and non-urgent categories. For example, the Fellow suggested designating a need for religious groups to have prayer sites over issues such as storage of club equipment.
- A Fellow noted that it is easy and convenient to make these meetings adversarial and asked how we can make these conversations more collaborative.
- A Fellow responded to a previous comment about categorizing the discussion topics between urgent and non-urgent topics, disagreeing with the proposal. The Fellow urged people to attend Order Council because that is where topics can best be refined. Also, topic urgency can be discussed during meetings.
- A Fellow cited Anchor House as an example of space that has been made available to transfer students. The Fellow stated that this is an example of possible solutions that seem to address the needs of students.
- A Fellow mentioned that there is talk about tearing down Evans Hall and asked how this will displace classes and student functions on campus.
- A Fellow proposed a potential solution for issues regarding performance space. Student groups could organize themselves into small groups and split rental fees. Each group would then be able to perform in a desirable location at a reduced cost. This would also have the effect of centralizing student performances. The Fellow mentioned that the auditorium at International House should not be forgotten as a potential campus venue.

- A Fellow expressed that International House is a good example for catering the spatial needs of students. There are multiple designated spaces: library, game room, kitchen, and study spaces. It is clearly a space where students and their needs are prioritized.
- A Fellow stated that any new construction on campus should center student needs, including comfort and accessibility.
- A Fellow addressed a previous comment regarding Evans Hall. Once current construction projects are finished, there will be room for the departments in Evans to relocate, at which point the building will be demolished.

Discussion Adjourned at 7:31 PM. The Meeting closed with Song. Notes were compiled by the Chronicler.