

Order of The Golden Bear

ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΔΟΞΑΝ
ESTABLISHED 1900

Temporary Meeting Location, March 19th, 2019

Items for the Good of the Order:

To follow up on last meeting's discussion about how to improve education, the undergraduate library's center for connected learning is aiming to develop new techniques for teaching. This includes using innovative technology and allowing collaboration between students and teachers.

Big Give, happened last week. Campus received over 14,000 various donations!

Announcement from Vice Chancellor of Outstanding Student Affairs- Student awards have been brought back this year. Nominations are due by Friday. This is a wonderful development. Learn more about these awards and how to nominate [here](#).

Next week is Spring Break. One fellow encourages students to have a great time, but also stay safe. To the graduating seniors, don't have doubts- everyone is behind you! Make sure to support your fellow students and direct them to appropriate resources. Keep mental health in mind in the following weeks and months- don't let it go unnoticed or unattended.

A reminder about threats in campus dining facilities due to improper food preparation. A number of campus officials have opened communication channels to make improvements. Hopefully this leads to preventing a greater issue.

College admissions scandal, and the UC's involvement in it. A reminder to fellows to stay up to date.

Items for the Good of the University: Collaboration Between the Collages

The Warden outlined some potential items to discuss: foreign language requirement- should it be broadened? How to continue offering our students the best education and realize their potential?

About a language requirement- critical to many aspects of the University mission. No requirement any longer, but it appears that there is a lack of funding for (and thus, a lack of opportunity to take classes in) foreign language departments. Though many

students travel abroad to receive education, many of these programs are in English! What allows our students and faculty to participate in the global community without any other tools without English? The question is more than this- for us not to recognize that our campus itself is a global community is shortsighted. Foreign language offerings have two principal advantages:

- Students who have second languages delve into this aspect of their identity more in college, to expand their depth in heritage or literature.
- It feels validating to hear your own language when in you're in a different country. This is affirming to one's identity- we should take part in this. We are a collective community, and welcome citizens from anywhere. There's nothing like language to transmit welcome.; language is a thread that is so important to identity. This is a critical issue, for us to offer various languages in order to be equitable. Many in the ASUC rail about the lack of language offerings, but nothing has yet been done about it.

On the same subject, a fellow who lived in International House adds that this is a place where you hear many languages. Sometimes tables were organized around common languages spoken.

I-House, founded in 1930, serves the purpose of offering a different climate (both culinary and hereditary) with regards to our community. Our language department should mirror the organization of I-House. People should really look into what I-House has to offer, both as a living space where learning language is a part of the living experience, but also as a comparison to how well folks coming to America have learned English (as a model as how to prepare our own students).

Here, the Warden has taken a brief poll on how many current students have taken a language course at Berkeley- fewer than 5 raise their hands.

- One fellow thought about taking French here at Cal, but it didn't end up working with their schedule. They also thought about taking Spanish, because it was something that their grandparents knew and spoke.
- Some of the most high-quality classes taught here are language courses, according to one fellow. But they do need more funding, as many courses are very full and have limited faculty to teach them.

A fellow brings up the idea of the breadth requirement, mainly in the College of Letters and Sciences. This fellow emphasizes its importance, especially for students studying majors with a limited scope. There are many majors that are more focused more on technical requirements than anything else. There are many issues which might be solved by bringing increased social awareness to a variety of fields- accomplished by the breadth requirement.

The University was viewed as a liberal arts institution through the 1950s. When the Sputnik satellite was launched, we shifted our goal and the social sciences became secondary. Breadth requirements were more extensive, but we have made a breakthrough with the American Culture requirement in recent history. We do NOT require students to take a single course in American History- how can we maintain the notion that we are graduating global citizens, let alone American citizens? Our lack of breadth requirements limits the abilities of our students, and their understanding of the issues in our society and how they relate to the broader world.

Breadth requirements are an interesting and timely topic: many STEM students complain about humanities classes, and vice versa. One specific area for improvement is to communicate the importance of interdisciplinary work. What are people really getting out of mandatory "breadth" courses when they can easily P/NP the course and hardly show up? Secondly, with computer coding/algorithms on the rise along with technology like CRISPR and genome editing, where is the ethics and morality in this? With this technology, our students should be engaged in the ethics behind these developments. Some students have ethics requirements, but many students do not take courses like these. Statistics, for example, has no ethics requirement. Some people even classify ethics courses as "easy A's," when they should really be more integral and taken more seriously.

Currently, the Law School and several other Professional schools emphasize social consciousness, and how to use the discipline in a way to improve society. Technological classes should also be looking at the impact of learning, and how to use what you learn to be socially positive. This, after all, is something that distinguishes Berkeley students from others- being well-rounded and conscientious about current issues. Breadth courses should not only impact what you do within your field of study, but also how you view and interact with society.

Between colleges and disciplines, one way that we might demonstrate to students the value in breadths is emphasizing the fact that careers often incorporate aspects of different disciplines! Letting students know that collaborating with areas of study outside of your own might be beneficial to a career path after graduating. Many problems that exist in the world today don't seclude themselves in one category or discipline- having knowledge in many areas can allow students to compose multi-level solutions to these complex issues.

One solution for making the L&S seven-course breadth more effective is by taking advantage of the many resources the University offers. For example, this fellow took a course on climate change which featured views from four different professors. Classes like these shows students that views on issues cannot stand isolated, but are actually part of a broader issue.

Continuing from the previous speaker, there are hundreds of interdisciplinary centers (including teaching and research) at Berkeley. A lot of drive for these are coming from

young faculty members. Many of these centers have opportunities for undergraduates to get involved- this fits with the Chancellor's aim of undergraduate discovery. The Data Science program even spawned from this philosophy.

Another fellow took a L&S Big Ideas interdisciplinary course about Art Curation, which also featured several professors from different departments. This course was able to bring many different lenses to a single topic. In one of this fellow's majors, there is room to explore interdisciplinary work. Sometimes, Berkeley students become tired over time so that they can only focus on their major classes- students can rarely "casually" take a class here at Cal. Maybe there is a way to work around these limitations?

This fellow visited Kroeber Hall to see the galleries there, and there was a collaboration piece between an art student and a biology student. One thing that left out of the conversation so far is the arts! (In addition to the sciences and social sciences). Also, we have to think about how we tell students valuable information- students need to see for themselves many different people from different backgrounds discussing issues with each other. As tight as GBO is, there should be a place where all new students are able to see different Deans and Chairs discuss different issues collaboratively.

As a side note- different Colleges can learn from each other about how to manage resources and make each other better.

Some fellows (when they were in college) only had options to take breadth courses, because of FPF. This fellow still congregates with high school friends, where they are the one person who studied humanities among many computer scientists. Apparently, these computer scientists care very little for the social sciences and humanities, and seem to reflect that employers simply care about the narrow window of specific topics which prompted the hiring. Nowadays, people see the University as a tool, rather than a home or something to contribute to. If tuition stays this high, that makes it hard to encourage students to take more classes. Taking classes casually is difficult with respect to time and financial reasons.

Breadth and AC requirements are partially in place to give unsure students perspective about what they want to study. A lot of our conversation is based around students who already know what they want to study, but there is a significant student population that deserves a good guided opportunity to experience different fields before they decide what to study.

One fellow disagrees with a notion above. Sometimes, people with disabilities have a certain advantage- that they can take their time with certain courses and requirements. This particular fellow thinks that some students might have to look for ways to slow down Cal's very fast pace, in order to get a proper education. For students who come from a tradition of giving back, they will tend to see the University as a home rather than a tool for the utilizing. College is by and large what the student makes of it- slowing the pace down is a tactical advantage.

Several previous speakers have compared departments to silos, isolated from others. This speaker encourages a new way to combine them- actually allowing students who study different majors to physically collaborate with each other, to prepare them with the knowledge of how to take different perspectives and put them into action. This also helps students interact with people who disagree with them. Collaboration is a highly sought-after skill which businesses are really interested in nowadays. Two ideas this speaker has: 1) more opportunities for people to combine and work on a project (maybe a competition team?) with others who disagree with them or hold different perspectives. As of yet, this speaker does not sense that this is available on campus. 2) What if there was an honors capstone project, where teams of students submit a project or proposal, which involved actual collaboration with teammates to produce ideas?

Another great avenue for collaboration is the URAP program. This speaker engaged with URAP in a department that they were not a part of. This specific speaker did a project on bearded pigs in Malaysia, but got to use their specific discipline to contribute to a larger goal (along with students in different disciplines.) This is good for both undergraduate students and graduates (along with professors!) There is a lot of opportunity for the latter two groups as well in addition to undergrads.

It's really cool for a lot of folks to realize that what they are interested in can make a real impact in society. Students can contribute positively to real issues in society, but usually only through collaboration with other people. Collaboration also gives students a newfound respect and sense of value of different majors.

The Capstone Project discussed earlier actually fits into the Chancellor's plan for discovery really well. Plans like this are already underway, with community leaders or faculty as sponsors for projects (which would have prizes and other cool rewards).

As a follow-up, the Moffitt Library has the Center for Connected Learning, which also has the Undergraduate Collider Space (modeled after tech companies that bring students together to develop a concept). Some of these are actually faculty and students working together. With the capstone project, integrating this feature of the library with other resources could facilitate the formation of Big Ideas. The Moffitt Library itself is a good visual model about how the University values collaboration among students, with integrative study spaces that facilitate collaboration.

There should be a platform where faculty from various fields could speak with new students during orientation at Haas Pavilion to stress inter-collaboration. Currently, there is a compartmentalization of research in a lot of fields, which isolates departments. Many faculty members hardly ever interact with each other!

A fellow is disappointed to hear that employers are looking for certain specific traits or knowledge to fit into their model. Berkeley is not like this- we don't give students one specific skill set; we are not a trade school. We really need to have people understand

what is happening beyond one little community- just look at how Facebook is struggling with privacy concerns.

The foundation for Capstone Projects actually already exists in the theater department. Graduating seniors can take part in this, which builds upon something that a student has already engaged with in the classroom. A play or a script can actually be realized in a setting outside academia. This model likely exists outside of just the theater department, but we should be able to spread them to other departments.

Do the department heads ever get together and share what their departments are strong at? If other departments only found out about these great opportunities, maybe good programs would be more widespread.

The original purpose of the Faculty Club (and clubs like it) were meant to help members of the faculty engage with topics outside their expertise and the people who study them. How can we support objectives that we want to see? Faculty collaborating is certainly one of these objectives.

A previous speaker mentioned that it is very difficult to get faculty together. This speaker thinks of convocation and commencement. In terms of commencement, it has gotten very large. Faculty hardly ever go to just sit on the stage! Getting them to give lectures and participate in other ways is a whole different ball game. Also, different departments make it very difficult to do interdisciplinary study- departments are unsure of the academic reliability of professors in other departments.

One fellow has experience with a student at Cal Poly who studied engineering. Cal Poly has a sister school, with credits that transfer between the schools with ease. This might be a good idea for Berkeley to take up.

The Faculty Club used to be a vibrant place where faculty members could gather for something as simple as a card game. This doesn't happen very much anymore. Like this function, inter-college collaboration has waned over the years. It's sometimes automatically assumed that if you eat in the Faculty Club, you are a member of the Club. But, there should be faculty members available in a non-academic environment that displays faculty members are real individuals.

