



**Usual Place, April 2, 2024**

*The meeting was convened at 6:00 PM.*

**Items for the good of the Order:**

- A Fellow extended an invitation to attend an event taking place this upcoming August 24th at 10:00 AM at the Mountain View Cemetery, located in Oakland. The event is free of charge and open to the public. The Fellow recommended that if anyone was interested in attending, they should wear comfortable footwear.
- Another Fellow pointed out that the windows were open given the high room temperature, and that if anyone objected to having the windows open to raise their case.
- A Fellow brings attention to the upcoming Football Fall schedule, with the first game against UC Davis taking place on August 31st.
- Warden reminds the Fellowships of upcoming elections and nominations. Warden highlighted that nomination submissions are due tonight. Also, elections will take place on April 16th and it will go however long it takes. Warden reminds Fellows to ensure to add primary and co-nominators.
- A Fellow asks if self-nomination for leadership positions needed the same procedure as regular nominations.
- The Warden clarifies that one needs to show interest via text or email.
- The Warden reminds the Fellowship to sign in to be able to vote.

**Items for the good of the University: Berkeley's Identity as a Public Institution**

- A Fellow reminds the Fellowship that Cal Day is next week. The Fellow invites the Fellowship to bring parents and emphasizes the opportunity to explore clubs.
- Another Fellow reminds the Fellowships that May 4th is transfer day encouraging everyone to attend and support transfer students.
- Another Fellow invites the Fellowships to partake in ASUC elections.
- Warden shares talking points:
  - Berkeley being a pioneering institution, what does this mean?
  - How does the physical position of UC Berkeley affect its professional development?
  - To what degree does the research conducted at the university reflect the values of the university when considering private funding?
  - Case study: Berkeley Way West, Microsoft sponsored floor
  - Who is donating? What is the relationship between alumni donors and students?
  - Relationship with other schools in the UC system
  - Identity statewide, nationally, and internationally

- How are clubs and associates getting funding for projects?
- Allowing underrepresented groups to tap into these powerful networks
- Is it important that groups not tapped into networks already begin to create their networks?

The Warden opens the floor for discussion.

A Fellow states that the University has a long history of being well-recognized in all areas, particularly being a progressive institution. The Fellow adds that Cal has had a strong science department, emphasizing that it hosted the brilliant minds that developed the bomb here. The Fellow expressed concerns about the difference in the reputation of the social sciences. During the Fellow's time at Cal, the social sciences were the second best in the world. Although the Goldman School of Public Policy is tied first with Stanford, there is not much talk about the other social science departments, the Fellow highlights. The Fellow makes an observation about Germany having a strong science reputation but lacking a social science emphasis. The Fellow stated that Cal should focus on making the social sciences a more recognized area.

Another Fellow shares that when discussing public versus private educational institutions, UCB usually has a strong reputation. The Fellow questions what problems private institutions solve. Following up his line of questioning, the Fellow shares a phrase they heard about private institutions "making access scarce" to people who don't possess the means to afford it.

A Fellow talks about the UC Berkeley published promotion video. The Fellow mentioned that the name "Berkeley" is named after Anglo-Irish bishop and philosopher George Berkeley. Berkeley, the Fellow adds, owned slaves and did not fulfill indigenous peoples signed treaties. The Fellow calls for students to understand history and connect themselves with it. Instead of misrepresenting it.

Another Fellow talks about other universities defending their reputations and learning from their mistakes. The Fellow pointed out all places that have accomplished good by recognizing their affiliation with things historical mishaps is a public institution in the South: The University of Mississippi. Where they handled a controversy over their affiliation with slavery and the Civil War with great character. They recognize the issues, embrace the wrong, and teach the good. So with respect to our reputation, despite the controversy, the University of Mississippi does it better than UCB, and we should teach that model, the Fellow concluded his remarks.

A different Fellow categorized UCB as strange. The Fellow shared their concerns about the weight UCB carried in their law school application. The Fellow mentions that they attended Cal because it was hard to get admitted into, but not necessarily for the bad things the University has done – as it was the Fellow's goal to get admitted into the hardest universities out there. Even though there is a lot of bad reputation, the consumption of negative UCB news, and a negative past, let us focus on the good, the Fellow shares. The Fellow compares the average Cal experience with other campuses that have a more positive environment and suggests that students should be excited to be here to learn and not tear each other down.

A Fellow adds to the previous speaker by stating that people (students at Cal) are hypocritical because everyone is smart and that we (UCB students) often are the standard. This hypocrisy stems from students pretending not knowing or making this look easy, but neglect talking about the hard work that goes into it. The Fellow laments that most of the time we (UCB students) cannot appreciate what all this is for.

Another Fellow notes the vast growth that can be done at Berkeley. The Fellow also finds it difficult that some peers in other places do not have enough advocates. For instance, undocumented students. The Fellow states that it is unfortunate that a lot of students do not have the same collaboration and community, and that should be UCB students' objective.

The Fellow talked about the differences between private and public universities. The Fellow noted that in private institutions students get and have more financial support. Second, the mentality fostered in private institutions is an us versus the World. One problem at Berkeley is that often problems are localized, and Fellow is disappointed.

Another Fellow says that UC Berkeley students are often at each other's throats. Whether that is about the Israel versus Palestinian conflict, the Apartheid, or abuses from Pinochet in Chile. UC Berkeley is a place where ideas flow, and should look at it in the long term. Their issue, the Fellow highlights, is that UCB is looking more like a private university. The Fellow adds, that the percentage of the state budget has declined and this decline has increased over time. The nature of funding is more concerning, not the conflicts the Fellow notes.

A Fellow mentions that the previous chancellor suggested getting more money from the federal government than from the state. An idea that should be pursued, the Fellow states. Another concern, the Fellow shares, is conflicts the University has. The Fellow talks about USC alumni, as an example that should be followed, where their cohesion relies on athletic funds and acknowledging their wrongdoings. They shared their experience working for a private school and said that Berkeley was more diverse. The Fellow adds that as long as there is money, people are willing to do stuff. The Fellow pivots the conversation to what would happen if the University does not comply with the laws or is getting away from something the University is not supposed to. The Fellow caveats that the public sector would be more hard and cold-hearted and would punish the University. The Fellow ends their remarks by stating that they do not want UCB to be complicit, as other institutions, with their mishaps.

Another Fellow comments that the sense of Cal community is shrinking. The Fellow states that UCLA has not shied away from its communal mentality. The Fellow highlights that despite differences at the University, there is still a well-established quality education. The Fellow emphasizes that UCB has a tremendously rich history. During events like the Charter event, no mentions of a community were made, and if the University wants to create a cohesive and collaborating community, that ought to change – the Fellow notes.

A Fellow blames the Cal Athletics for taking the Cal community away. They mentioned that no organization on campus can have the “Cal” name as part of their overall organization name. The Fellow says that the University should be solution-oriented, and that does not mean doing similar things in a better way. Instead, the Fellow offers a two-pronged approach: creating an alumni network that works to increase funding. The Fellow states that this should include marginalized students, as opposed to having fragmented networks within their career focus. The second approach, the Fellow adds, should be making a campus-wide event taking place on the Football field or around the Campanelle. Even though Cal Day exists, usually some people only focus on partying making other clubs/organizations go unnoticed. The Fellow shifts the conversation to why the Fellow attended Cal. The Fellow talks about some videos they watch on YouTube. The Fellow says that UCB is a school that has taught them how to think, but is concerned about the stark competition – whether it be for a slim amount of money or booking an on-campus facility. The Fellow ends their thoughts by saying that having underrepresented students in positions of power is crucial around campus, and students should not be fighting for things that already belong to them.

Another Fellow talks about how reputable UC Berkeley/Cal students are. Based on a conversation the Fellow had with a professor at a private institution, Cal students have a slight positive consideration. Because of great deflation, there is a great respect for the University, the Fellow adds. Cal has always had caring people who are committed and willing to work. The Fellow pivots the conversation to the campus conflicts and says that such conflicts are normal. But that conflict should yield compromise. Students on campus often argue about ideologies, and ideals, but should be open-minded. Lastly, the Fellow says that because money sometimes is the root cause, invites current students to be mindful in the future and give back to Cal.

A Fellow changes the topic and considers Berkeley’s identity as a public institution, from the perspective of someone who attended the California Community College system. The Fellow mentions that the UC system has a goal of admitting 1 transfer for every 2 freshmen who are admitted but there are disparities between the campuses. UC Berkeley in particular lacks resources to support transfers after coming to Cal. Oftentimes it is the same 5-10 community colleges that transfer students come from year after year showing the inequities in the California Community College system. After transferring, the Fellow reports witnessing a gap in the amount of resources available for transfer students at Cal. The Transfer Student Center only has two counselors and spends a majority of their time calling donors to fund their programs, the Fellow adds. The University talks a lot about how a third of transfers are from underrepresented minorities or that about half of transfers are EOP but fails to mention that these students lack the support necessary to serve these unserved communities. For a community of about 6,500 students, this isn’t enough, the Fellow remarks.

A Fellow builds upon alumni giving back and says that students/alumni usually want to donate to a campus where they feel loved and appreciated whether through Football or on-campus organizations. Having overcrowded spaces on campus does not contribute to that experience, the Fellow says. The Fellow would donate to their Community College because that is where they obtained their most support, but would not donate to Cal. The Fellow states that UC Berkeley has a secret weapon: being the most powerful public

institution in the United States. If students and faculty were able to look outwardly and support other UCs in their causes, then that would make UCB more powerful as enacting mass movements would be easier. UC Berkeley should be in synergy with other UCs, the Fellow remarks.

A Fellow advocates for mental health, and thinks this is a bigger issue on campus. The Fellow changes topics to affirmative action. In 1996 UC Berkeley outlawed race-based admissions, and the University should continue spearheading this change opening larger discussions. The way in which UC Berkeley evaluated their admitted students, starting from their curriculum and then their classes is a way different to look at college applications and should be a model that needs to be adopted by other institutions, the Fellow adds. Although UC Berkeley has reached out to more underrepresented students, the Fellow is concerned with how to equip those students once admitted.

Warden invites solutions-oriented comments.

A Fellow asks to clarify what does the Warden mean by solution-oriented comments. And based on past meetings, what solutions have come out from this?

Warden responds by stating that solutions are those that happen when Fellows provide an insight into their experiences. As this provides a different perspective to the attendees and compels them to act upon it, the Warden states.

A Fellow mentions that there is a free and fruitful discussion here, in the Fellowship. The Fellow mentions that there are powerful Fellows that could enact change.

A Warden emphasizes that walking inside the Usual Place, all Fellows drop titles at the door. The Warden adds that there is a lot of power in going and asking. The Warden takes this opportunity to call on associates to do their best to act upon the things learned in this Fellowship.

A Fellow notes that some Fellows need to understand that there are Fellows who experience anxiety admitting to being part of this organization. The Fellow shifts the discussion to issues that public institutions face, lack of money, and that is what the University needs. Other private institutions provide a different experience because they possess the financial means. The Fellow makes a distinction between the type of connections students make within or outside the University. The Fellow states: why would alumni care to give back when the campus did not care about them, and only cared about their admittance, and their tuition money? Does the campus care about all students? The Fellow responds that the genuine answer is no. The Fellow notes that these comments of theirs are meant for meeting notes and those who read them, and call them to act. The Fellow ends their remarks by stating that only when genuine care towards students and not just the outside optics, then can actual change be enacted.

Another Fellow answer speaks regarding students of color. The Fellow mentions that students of color do not see themselves on campus. The Fellow suggests drawing in and embracing these students, and one way to show this is by going to their high school.

A Fellow wonders what is stopping the Fellowship from email-blasting other people. The Fellow suggests sending summarized versions of the notes to students and faculty across campus to pick their interests and show that there are ongoing conversations about pressing on-campus issues. The Fellow reflects that before joining the Fellowship, they read the notes, and were left intrigued. Everybody or a couple of people can take some action, and some forum should be developed to promote our conversations to a wider audience. Which as a result can help people influence and help steer the University towards a better campus community, the Fellow remarks. The Fellow suggests having an Instagram account.

Another Fellow suggests creating a form where people can sign up to obtain the meeting notes.

*Discussion Adjourned at 7:30 PM. The Meeting closed in Song. Notes were compiled by the Chronicler.*