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Other Activities Outside of BEAM: Innovative Design, Research

General Questions

1. What committee would you like to lead? (Curriculum, External Affairs, Logistics, Mentor Development, Outreach, Site Coordination)

Mentor Development

2. Why do you want to run this committee? What makes this committee special to you?

In the past six semesters here at Berkeley, I've tried out seven different student organizations. Of those seven, BEAM is the one I have stuck with and by far the one I am most proud to be a part of. I was browsing around during DeCal Expo in the fall of my freshman year when I heard the words, "interested in teaching science and engineering to kids?" Initially, the word "engineering" immediately made me reject the flyer the same way the words "consulting" and "business" did. A minute later, I processed what I just heard and realized... science... kids... I love them both! So I went back and asked "do you have to be in engineering?" And I am so glad I turned around.

In my first semester, Malcolm X had the craziest kids—they screamed, fought, and cried regularly and I felt like I was always overwhelmed and never quite knew what to do. It was really heartwarming to return to Malcolm X in my fourth semester, because seeing myself in the same context a year and a half later (although the kids were different) **really** made me realize how much I've grown as a mentor. Unlike the first time I was there, I could get the kids' attention the second time around, I felt like they actually understood things I was explaining, and both the kids and I were really enjoying the time a lot more. More importantly, however, I felt like I was really making a difference in their lives in sparking their creativity and love for science. Being lucky enough to be placed at Malcolm X that semester and to reflect on my mentoring in that way was what made me realize I wanted to join Mentor Development. I felt that I have grown a lot as a mentor and wanted to be able to help foster that growth in others.

Although I've always loved seeing my own growth and the growth of my mentees, being in Mentor Development this year has given me a new layer of mentoring—being able to help all of BEAM's mentors grow, whether it be through creating engaging activities for first time mentors at MO, providing fresh perspectives on mentoring through MD

presentations, or hearing mentors reflect on their semester in the reflection project meetings. BEAM has taught me so much about what it means to be a mentor, an educator, and even a human being. This organization has helped me become who I am today, and I think everyone in BEAM can have the same experience I've had. I want to run the Mentor Development committee to be the backbone of the support system for all of BEAM's mentors. I believe I have the qualifications and perspective to run this committee successfully to develop our mentors to their full potential.

3. Please discuss any projects or initiatives you would be interested in leading.

I really appreciate how much MD has improved over the past few years! Presentation quality has improved GREATLY, mentors can reflect on their experience more, and presentation topics are reinforced through pre-lab questions and being posted on bCourses. I would like to continue making Mentor Development members, resources, and activities more available for Decal members and I have a lot of thoughts on how this could go about! However, of course, these are only from my perspective and whichever ideas go through will depend on the opinion of the rest of exec and the rest of mentor development. I am also very open to any feedback or suggestions anyone may have!

Outline

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 - B. Decal Activities
 - C. Mentoring FAQ
- II. Emphasizing that the Mentor Development Committee is a Team
 - A. MD Meeting Attendance
 - B. Collaborative Brainstorming
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- III. Continuing to Improve Presentation Quality
 - A. Presentation Scheduling
 - B. Public Speaking Skills & Lightning Talks
 - C. Interactivity of Presentations
- IV. Mentor Orientation
 - A. Ensuring Freshness for Returning Members
 - B. Facilitating a Dialogue Between New and Returning Members
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Mentor Development as a Continuous Resource for Decal Members

I think mentor development committee members have a lot they can offer to decal members! I believe Mentor Development should be a resource available throughout the semester—not just in MO, presentations, and the reflection project.

- A. **Semester-Long MD Buddies:** A common piece of feedback received from reflection project is that mentors would like MD buddies to be available throughout the whole semester. This could work out by having check-ins with MD buddies every 2 or 3 weeks, possibly on days that we don't have MD presentations or days where we finish lesson testing at decal early. That way, issues can be brought up and discussed throughout the semester, rather than just once in the reflection project meeting. Additionally, if MD committee members are up for it, we could possibly do (optional?) 1-on-1's between mentors and MD buddies to have more individualized & personal feedback.
- B. **Decal Activities:** There are a good amount of days where we don't end decal at 8pm! I think this extra time can be used to have decal activities that help out with classroom situations/management. A lot of people love the MD presentations and hearing different perspectives about mentoring, but many have said they would still want more help and guidance regarding direct classroom management. I think it would be great if MD could work with curriculum every week to work on an activity for how to teach the lesson or how to approach different situations that can come up with that specific lesson! (new power couple?!) I think this could work with line game / role playing type activities during decal. I like putting people on the spot to act out what they'd do because I feel like that's exactly what could happen in site—a situation could come up when you least expect it. This could also work by having MD/curriculum members doing a formalized/slightly scripted skit about different situations and how to handle them.
- C. **Mentoring FAQ:** This is also up to exec & MD members if they feel this would help or if anyone in MD would like to take this on as a project. I was thinking we could have a "Mentoring FAQ" document—this will have some frequently asked questions that new mentors may have. These questions can be gathered from an anonymous survey posted at Mentor Orientation and available throughout the semester for people to input any concerns or issues they have in site. MD members can also think of common problems/scenarios and compile the document that way!

Emphasizing that the Mentor Development Committee is a Team

I don't feel particularly bonded with the mentor development committee currently, but I think committee bonding is important both for strengthening MD's ideas/presentations and for cultivating an inclusive staff culture. I would like MD to work more closely instead of simply in pairs for our activities/presentations.

- A. **MD Meeting Attendance:** Currently, we have MD meetings on Wednesdays at 9pm the week before every MD presentation to go over the presentation and give feedback or come up with additional ideas. Initially, this meeting time was selected because it was *theoretically* when everyone would be home, done for the day, and free to be able to attend the meeting. However, meeting attendance is poor and it is quite frustrating. I understand that conflicts can occasionally arise, but I feel that **multiple** current MD members do not make a consistent effort to attend these meetings, which I feel is disrespectful to presenters for the week who have worked hard on their presentations and to those who consistently attend meetings. The presenters have put a lot of thought into their presentation and would ideally like to have as much feedback as possible from others, which is only possible with better meeting attendance. We are a TEAM and should give our support to every presenter. One meeting for my presentation had 5 members out of 8, including me and my partner, leaving only 3 people to give feedback when there should have been 6. Additionally, no one *really* wants to attend a 9pm meeting, so I would expect everyone to put in equal effort to attend—no one should get special treatment. Fortunately, a majority of MD members next year will be new to the committee, so I would like to firmly enforce that meeting attendance is mandatory and necessary for optimal feedback. You would want the most feedback you can get on your presentation, so you should do the same for others. We are a TEAM, not individuals!
- B. **Collaborative Brainstorming:** Currently, the presentation brainstorm process is done a few weeks before the presentation and only within the pair that is presenting. I would like to make it a process among all MD members—creating a master brainstorm document where everyone can put down ideas, link readings, videos, etc. throughout the semester. We tend to not take up a full hour during meetings, so I would like to use that time to talk about different readings together.
- C. **Availability of Past Presentations:** Right now, it is difficult to go through folders and look through past presentations for inspiration. If it's something the committee members would appreciate, I'd like to make a master document with links to past presentation brainstorms and slides, similar to curriculum's master document.

Continuing to Improve Presentation Quality

I think presentation quality and interactiveness has definitely made major strides in the past 6 semesters, but I believe it can still grow much more!

- A. **Presentation Scheduling:** I was unlucky this year, in that my two presentations were scheduled on packed days—the day of final lesson presentations in the fall and pi day in the spring. I felt limited in presentation timing and interactivity, and was frankly annoyed when people came up in the middle of the presentation to put their pies on the table when they should have been participating in the discussion that the two minutes was allotted for. I would like to work more closely with curriculum and other exec members on a semester timeline to ensure that MD presentations occur on days where there are **NO** special events, and if possible, on days where the curriculum presentation and lesson testing will require less time to allow for more engagement in MD presentations.
- B. **Public Speaking Skills & Lightning Talks:** Public speaking is an important skill for everyone to have! You get better at public speaking when you speak about something you're comfortable with. I think public speaking is especially important for mentor development presentations, to be able to better engage the audience regarding different perspectives on mentoring. If the rest of exec is up for it, I would like to introduce Staff Lightning Talks into our staff meetings! For these, it would be maybe 2 or 3 people each meeting doing 5 minute presentations on a random topic they're really passionate about—corgis, writing yelp reviews, or other niche hobbies/interests. This would be especially important for new staff members, and those in curriculum and mentor development. I think this would be really fun and help with staff bonding and ensuring that BEAM isn't just business :)
- C. **Presentation Interactivity:** I think curriculum has done a great job this semester of adding new things into presentations to make them more interactive. I would like to incorporate more into MD! I would like to ask this as a question in the staff app, because I think new staff members would have many fresh ideas! Also, I think that discussions can sometimes be a little bit dry if we only sit with our sites, so if it would be possible to start decal with sites shuffled so that people can talk to others not in their site for the MD presentations, then get back with their sites for lesson testing, I think that would help out a lot!

Mentor Orientation

- A. **Ensuring Freshness for Returning Members:** I think that mentor orientation can sometimes be a little dry for returning mentors, with things like teaching concepts and line game. This is also why I would like to emphasize interactive and fresh ideas from new MD committee members. However, if there aren't too many interactive ideas, one option is to have one station with new and returning mentors separated to have activities that are more tailored to each audience.
- B. **Facilitating a Dialogue Between New and Returning Members:** I'd like to have a portion of MO dedicated to facilitated conversations for new mentors to discuss concerns with returning mentors, who can give them an idea about common problems and their general experience in beam to make them more comfortable and feel part of the BEAM community! I would structure this with guided questions (e.g. biggest problem you've had in site, what you are looking forward to, favorite memory in BEAM, etc.) to facilitate a productive dialogue.

Misc

- A. I think it'd be cool if we could put some MD presentations on the website if that already isn't in progress for the new website. I think MD is an important part of BEAM that makes us special and not just a club that teaches science to kids!

Regular Staff Members

1. What qualities and skills do you think an exec member should have? How do you embody these qualities and skills? Please provide concrete examples from your past.

I think the number one quality that an exec member should show is dedication to BEAM. I really believe in leadership by example, and I think this really applies to exec. An exec member also has to have a balance between decisive and being open. Decisive as in being able to put their foot down and make decisions, open as in receptive to feedback and ideas from other staff members. And of course, an exec member needs to be extremely organized to manage the committee efficiently.

I think I've had to embody these qualities and skills through BEAM and through being in cabinet for Asian American Association. I believe that dedication means to consistently put in effort, to try to always grow and improve, and to show up to as many events as possible. BEAM is an organization that I've been extremely proud to be a part of these past three years, and as I mentioned earlier, an organization that has fostered so much growth in me. I've also tried my best to show up to social events to bond with other members of BEAM—both staff and decal. I think one of the most important parts

of being a leader is to make others feel included, so attending social events is a big part of leading by example. In Asian American Association (and as a site leader), I also learned what it means to be a social leader—to always have positive energy, to be encouraging to everyone, and to make conversation with those who seem quieter or out of the circle. I believe I can carry these skills to BEAM! Also in Asian American Association, I had a logistical role that improved my organization skills and required communicating with others to get forms filled out, shifts scheduled, rooms reserved, and more. It was in this role that I learned that nothing gets done the way you want it to if you don't speak your mind. I learned to call people out for not getting things done in time, to handle many last minute requests for rooms or shift changes, and to create and organize a system that could work for both me and the rest of the cabinet. However, I also know the importance of feedback and listening to everyone's ideas, so I created and managed an officer feedback form for the middle of the semester, in which I asked specific questions for feedback for what each individual officer was doing well and what he/she could improve upon.

2. What do you hope to accomplish as a director that you wouldn't be able to as a staff member?

I think that the director of the committee really determines the direction that the committee goes, rather than just contributing ideas and carrying out the duties of a staff member. I would like to become a director because of the gravity of the position and amount of influence that the position has on BEAM compared to a staff member. I want to be the one to take the lead on initiatives to improve the committee and ensure that ideas get carried out. I believe that I am the most experienced, dedicated, and qualified member of our current Mentor Development committee and would like to use my experience and perspective to continue to grow the committee.

I think the committee director is also responsible for the environment of the committee. Stephanie has done a really great job with turning curriculum into a TEAM, not just a committee, and that is something I would like MD to also be. I believe that I have learned those skills from being on cabinet for a social club and can facilitate an encouraging and collaborative environment for the committee.

Being on exec also holds a different weight—I would like to be a bigger part of BEAM and help with bigger decisions that need to be made as a club. There are many platforms that I really resonated with—transparency between committees, a more inclusive staff culture, etc.—that I believe I could help out more with as a member of exec.