Caltech Graduates and Postdocs Vote In Favor of Union Representation

Students Voice Concerns Over Title IX Effectiveness in Recent Poll
Maxwell Montemayor, Cristian Ponce

From January 29 to February 2, the Tech had an anonymous poll regarding undergraduate students’ experiences with Caltech’s Title IX office. The poll was conducted via a Microsoft Office Form, requiring respondents to sign in with Caltech credentials to confirm their identity, but did not save their identity with the responses. The Tech received verbal approval from the Institutional Review Board to publish the results of the poll in aggregate form. The poll yielded 125 responses from Caltech undergraduates. Responses highlighted issues regarding student perception of Caltech’s Title IX office:

How familiar are you with the Title IX office at our institution? (1 = Not at all familiar, 5 = Extremely familiar)
9 21 48 18 27
125 total responses, 3.19 avg.

Based on your understanding or experience, how effective do you believe the Title IX office addresses issues of unlawful discrimination and harassment? (1 = Not at all effective, 5 = Extremely effective)
37 44 24 25 4
113 total responses, 2.07 avg.

How likely would you be to file an official report in the Title IX office if you encountered or witnessed an incident that falls under its purview? (1 = Very unlikely, 5 = Very likely)
17 28 24 30 24
125 total responses, 3.13 avg.

Faculty Petition Speaks to Broader Implications for Undergraduate Admissions
Mahak Mathur

Last month, over 140 professorial faculty signed and submitted to the administration a petition calling for the reinstatement of the SAT as a criterion for admissions. In other words, rather than continuing with the testing moratorium which has been in place since 2020, signatories are urging the admissions committee to return to a test-optional platform for future cycles.

“We have more qualified students applying than there are spots at Caltech,” said Centennial Chair Professor and petition signatory John Dabiri in an interview with the Tech. Standardized testing “helps quantify the level of rigor the students are capable of.”

Dr. Dabiri was first a SURF intern, then a graduate student, and now a professor at the Institute. According to him, Caltech is a place where “the best and brightest...come for the most advanced education.” However, determining exactly which students are the “best” and “brightest” is the challenge the admissions committee faces year after year, a challenge only worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. With testing center closures across the globe, the admissions committee made the decision to implement a “testing moratorium” in order to increase access to Caltech. An internal study conducted by Caltech faculty concluded that “standardized test scores have little to no power in predicting students’ performance...students progress through the first-year core curriculum,” according to an official Institute statement.

Caltech’s decision to adopt a “test-blind” approach is not solely influenced by the pandemic, but is the product of increased scrutiny of standardized testing as a whole. Many believe that what the SAT and ACT promise is an arbitrary academic benefit that comes at a very concrete financial cost which can act as a barrier to entry for non-majority or minority students. Consequently, colleges and universities have been re-evaluating their SAT/ACT admissions requirements in an effort to increase diversity...continued on page 2

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Victoria Davis

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) held elections for Caltech graduate students and postdocs earlier this month to vote on whether they wanted to unionize and be represented by Caltech Grad Researchers and Postdocs United-UGW (CGPU-UAW). CGPU-UAW received votes from seventy-six percent of grad students voters (799 out of 1045) and eighty-three percent of postdoctoral voters (240 out of 290), the Caltech graduate and postdoc community has voted to unionize. Seventy-three percent of grad students identified as women (51%) while the non-binary individuals and men constituted 8% and 35% of participants, respectively. Significant differences in answers based on demographic data were not observed.

In addition to demographic information, students were asked the following questions on a scale of 1-5 (1 = Least, 5 = Most) regarding their perception of Caltech’s Title IX office:

How satisfied were you with your overall experience with the Title IX office? (1 = Very unsatisfied, 5 = Very satisfied)
12 11 10 5 1
39 total responses, 2.82 avg.

In your opinion, does the Title IX office process cases within a reasonable timeframe? (1 = Very Unreasonable, 5 = Very Timely)
29 6 3 10 4
38 total responses, 3.12 avg.

How likely would you be to file an official report in the Title IX office if you encountered or witnessed an incident that falls under its purview? (1 = Very unlikely, 5 = Very likely)
17 28 24 30 24
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Responses from Students who have Personally Interacted with The Title IX Office:

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29 6 3 10 4
38 total responses, 3.12 avg.

Responses from All Students:

How familiar are you with the Title IX office at our institution? (1 = Not at all familiar, 5 = Extremely familiar)
9 21 48 18 27
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Results to these two sets of questions are visualized by the graphs below.


classified


classified


classified


classified


classified
ASCIT 2024 Winter Elections: Candidate Statements

Currently, unaffiliated students are deeply concerned about the issues that emerge on students’ minds. I believe that every voice is important and that our community is stronger when we work together. As a candidate, I will use my experience and passion to advocate for our needs.

V.P. of Non-Academic Affairs / IHC Chair (2 Candidates)

Bryan Vane (Runner/Da Vinci MS 26)
Hey there! My name is Bryan Vane, and I’m running for IHC Chair. I’ve been involved in multiple aspects of student life at Caltech, which has allowed me to gain valuable experience and build relationships with students and faculty alike. As IHC Chair, I will work to foster a more inclusive and engaging environment where all students feel valued.

Molly Yeh (Runner/Da Vinci MS 26)
I am Molly Yeh, and I am running for IHC Chair. I have been involved in various student organizations at Caltech, and I have gained experience in leadership roles. As IHC Chair, I will focus on improving student engagement and fostering a sense of community.

BoC Chair (2 Candidates)

Jonathan Booker (Runner/Da Vinci MS 26)
Hello everyone! My name is Jonathan Booker. I’m a junior studying Physics and Computer Science. I have plenty of leadership experience and would like to demonstrate my skills by serving a term as your next BoC Chair.

Evan Portnoi (Runner/Da Vinci MS 26)
My name is Evan Portnoi. I am a junior studying Physics and Computer Science. I have experience in leadership roles and would like to bring that experience to the BoC.

IHC Secretary (2 Candidates)

Michael Gettner (Runner/Da Vinci MS 25)
I’m Michael Gettner, and I am running for IHC Secretary. I have been involved in IHC activities and would like to continue serving the student body as IHC Secretary.

Boerner Murgia (Runner/Da Vinci MS 25)
I am Boerner Murgia, a sophomore studying Astrophysics, and I’m running for IHC Secretary. I have been involved in various student organizations and would like to continue serving as IHC Secretary.

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In Page House, we’ve had an interesting past two weeks. We had a laser tag event where Pageboys competed against each other while enjoying pizza and snacks. We just cleared out the piano room and are preparing it for renovations for either an art room or expanded kitchen. Furthermore, we just appointed new excomm and new social teams, and are looking forward to a new year with this amazing team. As with any other week, we’ve been having happy hours every Friday, relaxing with each other after a long week of classes.

In佷 Page Hous佷, we’ve had an interesting past 佷wo weeks. W佷 had a la佷er tag even佷 where Pageboys c佷ompeted against each other 佷while enjoying 佷pizza and 佷snacks. W佷 just c佷leared out the piano room 佷and are 佷preparing 佷it 佷for renovations 佷for 佷either 佷an art room 佷or 佷expanded 佷kitchen. 佷Furthermore, 佷we just appointed 佷new 佷excomm 佷and 佷new 佷social 佷teams, 佷and 佷are 佷looking 佷forward 佷to 佷a 佷new 佷year 佷with 佷this 佷amazing 佷team. 佷As 佷with 佷any 佷other 佷week, 佷we’ve 佷been 佷having 佷happy 佷hours 佷every 佷Friday, 佷relaxing 佷with 佷each 佷other 佷after 佷a 佷long 佷week 佷of 佷classes.

The past few weeks in Fleming has been filled with many fun festivities and events. After a successful tournament following elections, our newest Soc Team received construction training as we begin to prepare for our interhouse two weeks ago. It was a great night, and I’m glad that everyone we’ve been having happy-hours every Friday, relaxing with each other after a long week of classes.

In Fleming for many decades. Other than that, our new Ath Team has led us to victories thus far in Interhouse Volleyball, a group of flemings received construction training as we begin to prepare for our interhouse, and we are excited for the year ahead with our new soc teams, and are looking forward to a new year with this amazing team. As with any other week, we’ve been having happy hours every Friday, relaxing with each other after a long week of classes.

In Avery House, we’ve been preparing for SURF applications, with SURF proposal workshops for the past two weeks with snacks from H-Mart. Two weeks ago, we also celebrated Lunar New Year with Lloyd and Venerable. Egg rolls and gyozas were provided by Tom Mannion. We also had a variety of popular Asian snacks such as shrimp crackers, Hello Panda, and Choceoons. Our Faculty in Residence are still hosting amazing events. Their spring event two weeks ago included a coffee cart, fortune teller, and V-day activities. We were able to get a barista drink, make a valentine, and see into our futures. We also hosted Avery Tea Time where we sipped on a selection of quality hot teas and munched on some delicious snacks and pastries.

In Lloyd, we just had a Fresh-Senior Valentine’s Day brunch. Lloyd smores and juniors cooked and served for the seniors and the frost. We made sausages, hash browns, waffles, with an assortment of jams and syrups. Two weeks ago, we also celebrated Lunar New Year with Venerable and Avery. We also held a formal dinner, where all the Lloyds showed up in their finest attire and all looked stunning.

Last week saw the start of Venerable’s traveling dinners, wherein we dined with a new house every weeknight for the two weeks leading up to our interhouse. On that note, OPf preparations are coming along nicely. Wallboards are painted and floorboards are mounted. We are excited and ready to welcome Caltech Undergraduates to our Space Rodeo on March 2nd at 10 PM!

Venerable also saw a productivity spike, with our in-house SFP ambassadors and History Writing Center teams joining forces to organize a SURF proposal writing workshop. A myriad of students also lent their expertise at the ARC Option Advising in conjunction with Registration Day.

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Last but not least, this past weekend was a testament to the excellence of the Caltech performing arts. Several Vens took the stage in orchestra concerts and theatre productions, only outnumbered by their supportive Venerable peers in the audience.

It has been heartening to see the passion of The People in action, as well as to connect with Houses across campus. We’re excited to see everyone at OPI!

In Ricketts, we just hosted our interhouse two weeks ago. It was a great night, and I’m glad that everyone was able to see the hard work we put into making it happen. Below and Venerable also visited us on the same night for their travelling dinners, and we extended the invitation to the rest of the houses.
The Roots of PBU at Caltech: Taylor Knapp

When I sat down with Elena Priesen-Reis, a 2-year graduate student at Caltech, her enthusiasm for the topic of sustainability was palpable.

Elena Priesen-Reis, a 2-year graduate student at Caltech, was eager to discuss the impact of sustainability on campus life. She explained how the idea of PBU (sustainability) first came into her awareness during her time at Caltech, one of the few places where environmental initiatives are taken seriously.

Elena went on to describe her experiences as a member of PBU, the student organization that has spearheaded many of the sustainability initiatives on campus. She spoke about the challenges and successes of implementing sustainable practices and the importance of community involvement.

In summary, Elena Priesen-Reis's passion for sustainability and her involvement in PBU at Caltech demonstrate the importance of student-led initiatives in driving change and creating a more sustainable future.
Every issue we’ll show you a different location on campus. Find the place and find the QR code hidden there to sign the log book and win a fabulous prize?!?

*On campus* is defined by the bounds of the map on caltech.edu/map/campus.
The QR code will be hidden somewhere within the pictured area.

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**CalGuesser**

#### Last issue’s winners!

**CalGesser #6 – February 6, 2024**

**Congrats, you found it!!!**

Leave your name/username, year/department, and date found!

*George Washington Hayes* / g8.88 / 2024-02-06

*css* / g6 pma / 20240215 / that white cup has been there for my whole phd

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**Editor’s Note:** We want to hear your perspective!

We strive to represent every voice in the Caltech Community with fairness, accuracy, and impartiality in our news reporting.

Send submissions or contact the Tech editorial team at tech@caltech.edu

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**That’s Amore!**

**CalGesser #7**

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**The California Tech**

**CalGesser**

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**The California Tech**

**Journalistic Principles**

The News-Opinion divide

All articles shall be clearly and explic- itly labeled as either News or Opinion/Editorial.

News articles report on topics that have been thoroughly researched by Tech staff writers, and should be impartial to any one point of view. In a News article, the writer shall not insert their own personal feelings on the matter; the purpose is to let the facts speak for themselves. The Tech assumes full responsibility for all content published as News.

In contrast, Opinion articles (including Letters to the Editor) may be written and submitted by anyone on any topic, while the Tech will edit all published Opinions to ensure no wrong or mis- leading information, we do not other- wise interfere. Again, the role of the Tech here is to help the whole campus communicate their ideas and share their stories, not promote specific ones.

Content published as Opinions do not necessarily represent the values of the Tech or our staff.

An exception to this is Editorials, which are written by Tech staff and represent official opinions of the Tech. Any informa- tion and sources in Editorials shall be held to the same standard as News reports, but there is no promise or ex- pectation of impartial coverage.

**Fair Reporting**

All facts of major significance and rele- vance to an article shall be sought out and included.

If an assertion is made by a source about a specific person or organization, they shall be contacted and given a reasonable amount of time to respond before publication. In other words, no second-hand information or hearsay shall stand on its own.

**Quotes and Attribution of Infor- mation**

Facts and quotes that were not collect- ed directly by Tech reporters shall be attributed. Articles shall clearly differ- entiate between what a reporter saw and heard first-hand vs. what a report- er heard second-hand.

**Sources**

Sources’ opinions are just that — opin- ions. Expert opinions are considered genuine, while witness opinions are more trustworthy than unnamed sources. When speaking with sources, we shall identify ourselves as Tech reporters and clarify why. Sources for the Tech will never be surprised to see their name published.

In published content, we shall put our sources’ quotes into context, and — as appropriate — clarify what question was being answered.

We always ask that a source speak with us on the record for the sake of journal- istic integrity. We want our audience to receive information that is credible and useful to them. Named sources are more trustworthy than unnamed sources because, by definition, un- named sources cannot be held to the same standard as named ones.

While we consider all anonymous submissions at face value, we will consider only sources identified by their name in their submission. All written work re- mains property of its author. The advertising deadline is 12 pm on Friday; all advertising should be submitted electronically or as a camera ready art, but the Tech can also do simple typesetting and arrangement. All advertising inquiries should be directed to the business manager at tech@caltech.edu.

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**Communication**

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**Correction Policy**

We strive for promptness in correcting any errors in published content. We shall tell readers, as clearly and quickly as possible, when we know why something is incorrect.

Corrections shall be published to articles to be immediately noticed by the readership of the Tech at tech.caltech.edu. If appro- priate, corrections will also be pub- lished in the following Tech print issue.

**Honor Code Applies**

In cases of plagiarism or outright cheating, the Honor Code is the guiding principle.

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**The California Tech #7**

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**The California Tech**

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**The California Tech**

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The California Tech aims to pub- lish biweekly; except during vaca- tion and examination periods by the Associated Students of the California Institute of Technologi- cal. The opinions expressed herein are strictly those of the authors and advertisers. Letters and submissions are welcome; email submissions to tech@caltech.edu, or submit them on our Discord server (https:// tech.caltech.edu/discord). The editors reserve the right to edit and abridge all submissions for any reason. All written work re- mains property of its author. The advertising deadline is 12 pm on Friday; all advertising should be submitted electronically or as a camera ready art, but the Tech can also do simple typesetting and arrangement. All advertising inquiries should be directed to the business manager at tech@caltech.edu.