

Mission Accomplished?

Race/ethnic & socio-economic diversity within the BSC

A focus on UCB undergrads within the BSC

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The Berkeley Student Cooperatives (BSC) meets a critical need: the mission is to provide a quality, low-cost cooperative housing to university students, thereby providing an educational opportunity for students who might not otherwise be able to afford a university education.

The BSC has long welcomed students from a diverse array of backgrounds, reaching back to its beginnings in 1933, and today provides a valuable service to over 1,200 students in the Berkeley community and beyond. This summary highlights socio-demographics differences that exist between BSC residences and compares socio-demographics of BSC UCB undergraduates, 88% of the entire BSC population, with UC Berkeley students on campus. The report explores the race/ethnicity of the pool of applicants to explore race/ethnic trends in application. This summary also makes recommendations and suggestions for further research to improve the BSC and ensure that its mission is met.

Diversity within the BSC

The Berkeley Student Cooperative recognizes the importance of data collection in its efforts to serve students in Berkeley and surrounding communities. The Cabinet and Board of Directors commissioned an exploration of the socio-demographic differences between Rochdale and Fenwick members versus the room and board houses and hired a Program Management Intern in Spring 2012 to carry out this project.

As part of the project, the Project Management Intern, Catherine N. Barry, MA, designed and implemented the first large-scale demographic survey of organization membership, the BSC Census 2012 to better understand the dynamics of the organization. This census collected information not only on the socio-demographic composition of student members, such as race/ethnicity, parental income, and sexual orientation, but it also collected information about member opinions and experiences such as how members heard about the BSC, their top reasons for choosing to live in the coops, and how long they've lived in the BSC.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of the Spring 2012 project commissioned by the BSC Cabinet and Board of Directors was to study factors affecting the economic and ethnic diversity of the BSC membership, including the reasons for the disproportionate representation of lower-income students of color in the BSC cooperative south side apartments as compared to the 15 room and board cooperative houses.

BSC residences are categorized into 3 distinct groups, and this report focuses its analysis on the first two:

1. Rochdale and Fenwick apartments, which provide apartment style living with no board provisions on the south side of campus, referred in the report as ‘the undergraduate apartments’;
2. 15 mostly undergraduate room and board houses including African American Theme House, Casa Zimbabwe, Andres Castro Arms, Cloyne, Davis, Euclid, Hoyt, Kidd, Kingman, Lothlorien, Ridge, Sherman, Stebbins, Oscar Wilde, and Wolf, referred throughout the report as ‘15 room and board houses’ or ‘15 undergraduate houses’ or ‘15 houses’;
3. Northside apartments, Hillegass/Parker and The Convent, which are more dominated by graduate students and re-entry students (undergraduates over age 25). They are referred in the report as ‘graduate and re-entry focused residences’.

Summary of Findings:

Compared to populations of UCB undergrads on campus:

- African-origin UCB undergrads in the BSC are proportionately represented in the Rochdale and Fenwick apartments but underrepresented within the 15 houses;
- Asian-origin UCB undergrads in the BSC are very underrepresented, more underrepresented in Rochdale and Fenwick than in the 15 houses
- Latino UCB undergrads in the BSC are very overrepresented in Rochdale and Fenwick but proportionally represented within the 15 houses;
- White UCB undergrads in the BSC are very overrepresented within houses but underrepresented within the undergraduate apartments

- Asians apply to the BSC at low rates compared to their proportions on UCB campus; Latinos and Whites at higher rates; African Americans apply at almost equal proportions.

- Potential barriers to house living that could affect persons of color, persons from less advantaged economic backgrounds:
 - Cost
 - Food politics
 - Cleanliness
 - Social networks
 - ‘White’ and ‘Economic’ privilege

- Rochdale and Fenwick members and members of the 15 houses seek different lifestyles:
 - Rochdale/Fenwick members search for independent, apartment style living near campus at a low cost
 - 15 house members seek the cooperative experience, social life and a sense of community along with low cost.

Data:

Three primary data sources were utilized for the research, the BSC Census 2012, BSC Focus Groups and interviews, and BSC online applicant pool data. The BSC Census 2012 was designed to paint a broad picture of BSC membership and record socio-demographic data not previously collected by the BSC on a large scale. The BSC Focus Groups were designed to draw out impressions and lived experiences of members. Focus Groups occurred in 12 of the 15 room and board houses and in Rochdale and Fenwick. An analysis of BSC online applicant pool data from September 2010 to February 2012 provided information application trends among race/ethnic groups. See appendix for details about methodology and assumptions.

In addition, data from the UC Berkeley Office of Planning and Analysis (OPA) undergraduate and graduate student surveys were used to compare BSC UC Berkeley student members with UC Berkeley students on campus. See Appendix for details about sources.

90% of members in Rochdale, Fenwick and the 15 room and board houses are UC Berkeley undergraduate students. As a point of comparison, we assess the socio-demographics of UC Berkeley undergraduates living within the BSC with UCB undergraduate on campus. This allows us to assess how well the BSC membership within the undergraduate apartments and the 15 houses reflect the socio-demographics of the University of California, Berkeley, where almost all of the BSC members in those residences attend.

This report focuses on the differences between Rochdale and Fenwick apartments versus the 15 mostly undergraduate room and board houses because they are similar in terms of proportions of members who are UCB undergraduates. Northside, Convent, and Hillegass/Parker residents serve a much higher proportion of graduate students and re-entry students (undergrads age 25 & over) than the other residences and are analytically distinct from the largely UCB undergrad population of Rochdale, Fenwick and the other 15 room and board houses. For example, only 22% of BSC members in Northside, Convent, and Hillegass/Parker are UCB undergraduate students; of those UCB undergraduates, 69% are re-entry students – much higher than the 2% of UCB undergraduates living in Rochdale, Fenwick and the 15 houses combined. Because of these differences and largely non-UCB undergraduate population, the graduate and re-entry focused residences are not analyzed within this report. However, they are available in the attached spreadsheet document on BSC Census 2012 results.

BSC Census 2012

The BSC Census 2012 was designed and implemented in Spring 2012; data collection took place from March 10, 2012 to April 11, 2012. 910 out of 1,256 members responded to the survey, resulting in a 73% overall response rate. This includes members from Rochdale and Fenwick, the 15 room and board houses, and Northside, Hillegass/Parker, and the Convent. The BSC Census 2012 collected socio-demographic information including age, race/ethnicity, and socio-economic background as well as academic information such as major, year in school, and institution attending. The instrument also inquired about member opinions and experiences, including top reasons for choosing to live in the BSC and how respondents heard about the BSC.

BSC Focus Groups and Interviews

BSC Focus Groups and interviews were conducted to learn about member experiences regarding cost, boarding, diversity, cleanliness and other aspect of BSC living. Focus groups are not meant to be statistically representative of member experiences; their purpose is to flesh out themes that arise. BSC Focus Groups were conducted within 12 of the 15 room and board houses and within Rochdale and Fenwick for a total of 84 BSC members (7% of total BSC membership). See Figure 1 below for more details. Focus Group participants self-reported their race/ethnic group membership and international student status on note cards passed out during the Focus Groups.

**Table 1: Focus Group Discussions, Spring 2012
Numbers of participants, by self-reported race/ethnicity**

	African *	Asian *	Latino	White *	International	NR/Oth	Total
Rochdale & Fenwick	0	1	7	1	0	0	9
Afro House	0	0	2	4	0	0	6
Casa Zimbabwe	0	1	0	3	3	2	9
Castro	0	1	3	1	0	0	5
Cloyne	1	2	1	6	0	1	11
Davis	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Kidd	0	2	2	4	0	0	8
Kingman	0	2	0	4	1	0	7
Lothlorien	0	1	0	1	0	3	5
Ridge	0	1	0	3	1	0	5
Sherman	1	2	1	1	1	0	6
Stebbins**	0	0	0	0	1	4	5
Wilde	0	0	0	6	0	1	7
Total	2	13	17	34	7	11	84

* non-Hispanic/Latino; NR/Oth = Not Reported or reported as ‘Other’

** Stebbins Focus Group participants unfortunately were not asked to self-report race/ethnic status, but one member mentioned his international student status during discussion

Source: BSC Focus Groups 2012

One-on-One Interviews

In addition, 6 student staff or students leaders (4 Latino, 1 Asian, 1 White) and 2 former BSC members (1 Asian, 1 Latino) were interviewed one-on-one; 6 BSC non-student staff were interviewed one-on-one to gain insights, impressions and information from the staff points of view. Two employees with the Berkeley Rent Board were also interviewed, to explore potential barriers within the city of Berkeley that may account for socio-demographic and race/ethnic differences between Rochdale and Fenwick versus the 15 houses.

Results:

Socio-Demographic Composition

Socio-demographic characteristics differ between the undergraduate apartments and the 15 undergraduate houses. A much higher proportion of Rochdale and Fenwick members report Pell grant and Cal grant receipt, are much more likely to participate in the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), be first generation college students, come from families making less than \$50,000 a year, are slightly more likely to participate in the Disabled Students Program (DSP)+ and are much more likely to be Latino than BSC members in the 15 undergraduate houses. See appendix for EOP and DSP definitions.

Comparing EOP & DSP Students at UCB and in the BSC:

Table 2

	UC Berkeley campus undergrads	Rochdale & Fenwick UCB undergrads	15 houses UCB undergrads
EOP	12%*	80%^	12%^
DSP	3%**	5%^	4%^

* Source: Personal correspondence with Arthur Gong from the UCB Office of Planning and Analysis (OPA)

** Source: Personal correspondence with Dr. Chiba & Cathy Jay from DSP Office: 1,125 students served by DSP in 2010-11

^ Source: BSC Housing Department (verified statuses)

^^Source: BSC Housing Department (verified statuses); not sorted into UCB undergrads only; can include non-UCB, grad students

Economic Status

Similar proportions of UCB undergrads in Rochdale and Fenwick (81%) and the 15 houses (86%) report tax dependent status. However, parental earnings among the two residence types are dramatically different: students with lower-than-middle income dominate Rochdale and Fenwick while the opposite is true in the 15 houses. See Figure 1 for more details.

BSC UCB undergrads in Rochdale and Fenwick generally report low parental income: more than one-third report parental income of less than \$20,000 versus only 7% of those in the 15 undergrad houses; over half of Roch/Fen members report parental income between \$20,000 and \$79,999 versus one-third in the 15 houses.

Parental income of \$80,000 to \$140,000 signifies 'middle income' according to the UCB's Middle Income Access Plan (MCAP); only 7% of Rochdale and Fenwick members fall in the range of \$80,000 - \$149,999, compared to one-third of those in the 15 houses – only slightly less than the 35% of UCB undergraduate students on campus falling in the middle income range (Note: The BSC Census 2012 asked about income in predetermined income ranges; unfortunately middle income range within the BSC Census 2012 is \$80,000-\$149,999).

And the numbers are stark among those who report parent’s earnings in the highest income category: only 2% of Rochdale and Fenwick members, but more than one-quarter of the UCB students in the 15 houses report parental income at or above \$150,000. See Figure 1.

A one-on-one interview with a Berkeley Rent Board official illustrated the importance of the BSC apartments to persons from disadvantaged backgrounds. The official pointed out that individuals from lower-income groups have fewer resources available for credit checks and rent deposits that many landlords require in Berkeley, a high rent city where ‘landlords can always find somebody to rent’ their property, no matter the demands or rates. The BSC undergraduate apartments, then, offer an opportunity for affordable, quality housing for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who may not be able to afford to pay upfront the first and last month’s rent, plus a rental application fee and a credit check.

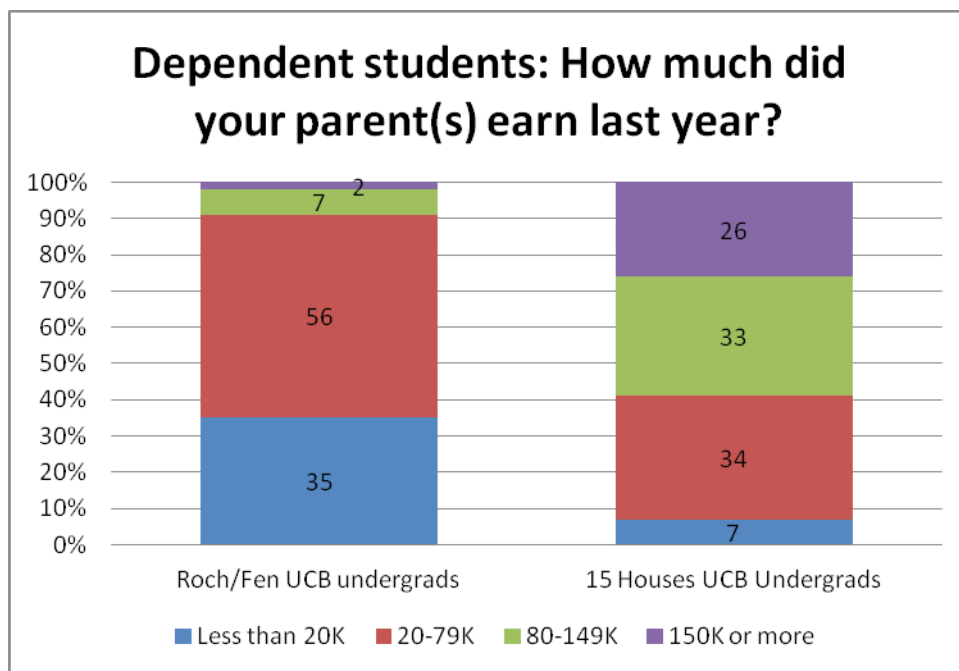


Figure 1
Source: BSC Census 2012

Race/ethnicity

Examining members by race/ethnic subgroups within Rochdale/Fenwick and the 15 houses shows interesting patterns among residents in each residence type. Latinos form the majority of members within the Rochdale and Fenwick, while whites are the majority in the 15 houses, despite each groups much smaller proportion on the UCB campus. See appendix for notes on race/ethnic categories; following UCB’s reporting method, international students are not placed into any race/ethnic category and are reported as ‘international students’ within the race/ethnic framework.

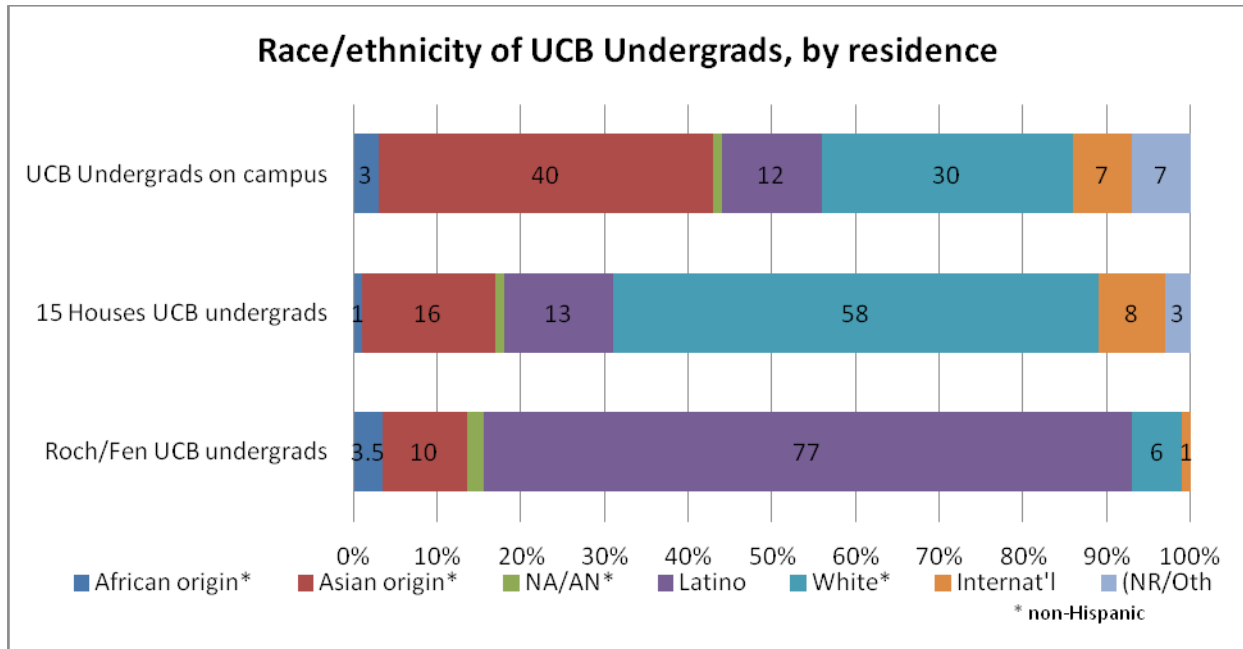


Figure 2; Source: BSC Census 2012; UCB Office of Planning & Analysis

African origin, non-Hispanic UCB undergraduate members are represented proportionately within Rochdale and Fenwick (3.5%) compared to their proportions on campus (3%), but underrepresented within the houses (1%).

Asian origin, non-Hispanic UCB undergraduate members are very underrepresented in both residences compared to their proportions on campus (40%), but more underrepresented within Rochdale and Fenwick (10%) than in the 15 houses (16%).

Latino/Hispanic UCB undergraduate members are represented proportionately within the 15 houses (13%) compared to their campus proportion (12%), but they are very overrepresented within Rochdale and Fenwick, comprising 77% of the UCB undergrads residing there.

White UCB undergraduates are very overrepresented within the 15 houses (58%) compared to their proportion on campus (30%), while they are underrepresented within the undergrad apartments (6%).

International students are represented proportionately in the 15 houses (8%) compared to campus (7%), while very underrepresented within Rochdale and Fenwick apartments (0%).

Race/ethnicity and Economic Indicators

A closer look at the socio-demographics within groups reveals that racial/ethnic minority members within the 15 houses report more advantaged socio-economic backgrounds than their

counterparts in Rochdale and Fenwick, as measured by parental/personal income, childhood economic status, Pell grant and Cal grant receipt, and first generation college student status.

In addition, race/ethnic minority members within the 15 houses report religious background and sexual orientations that are more similar to other house members than to race/ethnic minority members in the undergraduate apartments, suggesting that minority members within 15 houses differ from minority members within Rochdale and Fenwick on other, non-economic dimensions.

Parental income of dependent students in Rochdale/Fenwick vs. 15 houses is depicted below in Figures 3 and 4; see appendix for details of other measures. UCB undergraduates in the international student, Native American/Alaska Native, and Not Reported/Other categories are not reported below to save space.

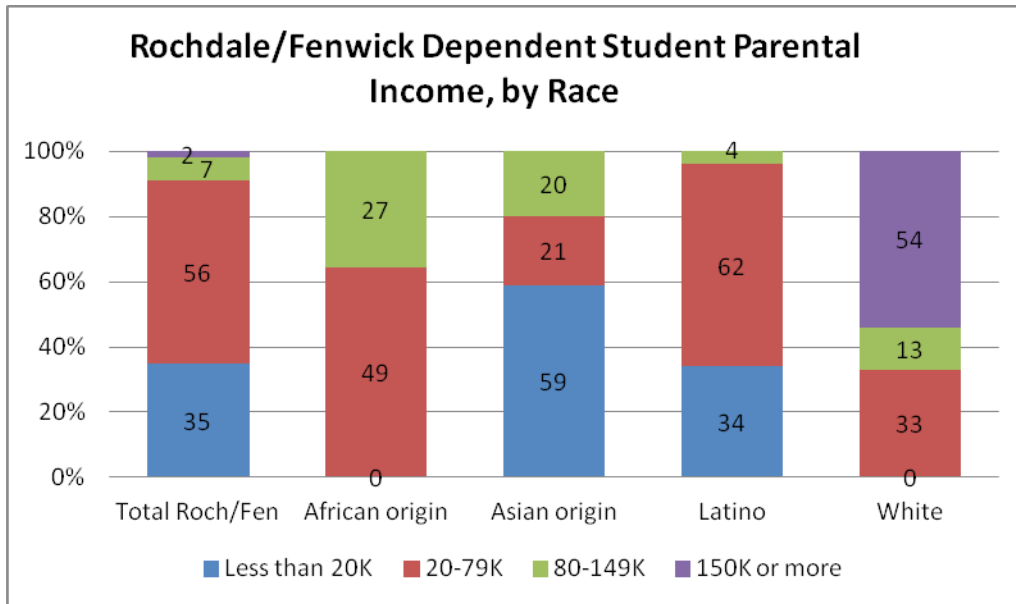


Figure 3
Source: BSC Census 2012

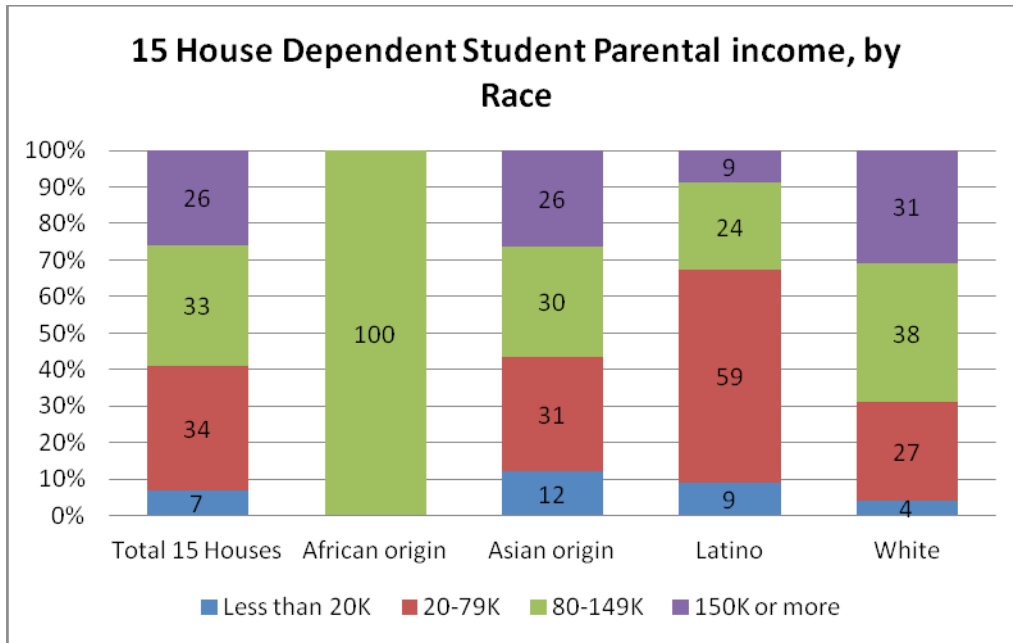


Figure 4
Source: BSC Census 2012

These figures show that UCB undergraduates of color within Rochdale and Fenwick generally come households with less-than-middle income categories (below \$80,000) . In Rochdale and Fenwick: 49% of African origin, 80% of Asian origin, and 96% of Latino dependent UCB undergraduate students reported parental income below \$80,000.

This varies more within 15 houses, but in general persons of color indicated higher economic status in the house than in Rochdale and Fenwick. In the 15 houses: no members of African origin report less than middle income of parents (but see notes on Sample Size within the methodology section) while 43% of Asian origin and 68% of Latinos report parental income less than \$80,000.

Analyses of other economic indicators, such as first generation college status, Pell and Cal grant receipt and other measures show the same trends. They are not included here because of space limitations.

Other Notable Differences:

Rochdale and Fenwick UCB undergraduates are more stable with less turnover: 53% entered the BSC prior to summer 2011 compared to 38% of the 15 house members who entered before that time. 12% of Rochdale and Fenwick UCB undergrads have ever lived in a non-Rochdale/Fenwick BSC residence compared to 39% of UCB undergrads within the 15 houses who have resided in a BSC coop different from their current one. Latinos, Asian origin, and African origin within the undergraduate apartments, on average, entered the BSC before their Latino, Asian origin, and African origin counterparts in the 15 houses; this holds true for whites.

Trends suggest persons of color in houses are less disadvantaged, may have different friend networks and may feel more comfortable in more diverse settings than persons of color in the undergraduate apartments do.

For example:

- A female Latina living in house met some Rochdale and Fenwick UCB undergrad Latinas on a trip abroad, but said, “I didn’t have much in common with them.” When asked further about it she mentioned that they didn’t talk about the same things or care about the same things and she felt she had more in common with members of her house.

Hearing about the BSC

Most members, regardless of residence, learned about the BSC through word-of-mouth: friends, family members, teachers, acquaintances, UCB tour guides, UCB program staff and parties. Though word-of-mouth dominates both residence categories, the social contacts they reflect are not the same.

College friends were most often mentioned as the main word-of-mouth point of contact. In Rochdale and Fenwick, these friends were most often involved in a common student group, such as Hermanos Unidos, while in the 15 houses, these friends were generally individual friendships.

Focus group discussions and open-ended comments reported within the BSC suggest that a significant minority of members in the 15 houses often heard about the BSC from family members such as parents, cousins, siblings as well as high school friends and teachers who told them about the BSC before they even attended Cal.

For example:

- Male, White, lower-middle income in a house was told he should live in the coops in high school when he told friends he was going to Cal

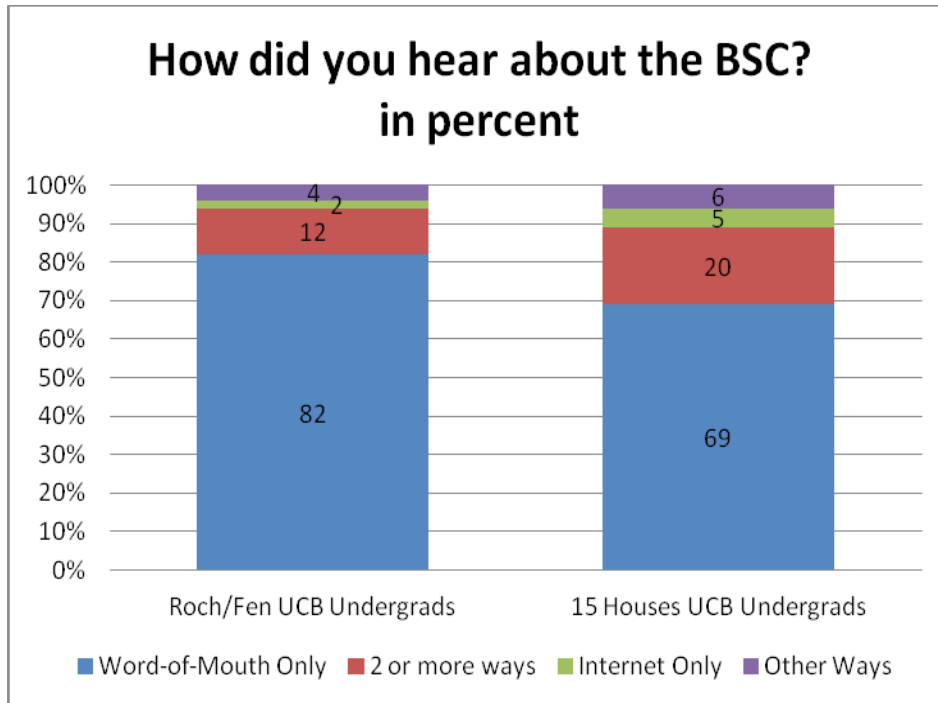


Figure 5
Source: BSC Census 2012

Rochdale and Fenwick UCB undergraduates describe the presence of Latino student groups who reside there and use the common areas and space, including hosting Latino students who have been accepted to Cal.

A significant minority of UCB undergraduates within the 15 houses mentioned BSC parties attracted them: they heard about and attended the ‘wild’ parties through friends and friends of friends and those connections and experiences influenced their decision to move in.

For example,

- A male, Asian origin student in one of the focus groups at the 15 houses mentioned hearing about the crazy, wild parties and thought: “Love it, I have to be there!”
- A male, white student discussed his interest in parties, but not the fraternity scene, so the BSC was a good fit.

Generally, the party-theme was brought up in the larger houses where there were bigger parties relatively often- CZ, Cloyne, but others were noted as well, such as Wilde. A few members in the smaller houses mentioned their attraction to a more tranquil, quiet lifestyle that they found in a smaller-sized house.

Who applies to the BSC?

Once individuals hear about the BSC, they must take the next step and apply. Available word-of-mouth networks may unintentionally exclude African-American and Asian origin UCB undergraduates while privileging Latino and white UCB students; that may account for the underrepresentation or overrepresentation of race/ethnic groups. Online applicant pool data from 4,093 UCB undergraduate online applicants to the BSC from September 2010 to February 2012 does suggest that race/ethnic groups apply at proportions that do not reflect the UCB undergraduate student body composition. See notes in the appendix about the applicant sample.

Table 3

BSC Online UCB Undergraduate Applicants, Sept. 2010-Feb. 2012 (N=4,093)		
Race/Ethnicity	UCB Undergrad, Spring 2012	BSC UCB Undergrad Applicants (self-reported)
	Source:UCB Office of Planning and Analysis http://opa.berkeley.edu/surveys/UCUES/2011	Source: BSC Housing Dept.
African origin*	3%	4%
Asian origin*	40%	17%
NA/AN *	1%	1%
Latino	12%	25%
White*	30%	35%
International	7%	10%
Decline/other	7%	9%
* non-Latino		N=4,093

Part of the cause of the different race/ethnic group membership of UCB undergraduate in the BSC reflects a ‘Pipeline Problem’:

- Asian origin students apply at proportions much lower than their representation on the UCB campus
- Latino students apply at much higher proportions than their representation on the UCB campus
- White students apply at higher proportions than their representation on the UCB campus
- International students apply at higher proportions than their representation on UCB campus

Direct comparisons with the current BSC UCB undergraduate population are not made here; applicant pool data covers a period of 2 years and there may be differential rates of applicant acceptance and BSC membership retention among race/ethnic groups that make a direct

comparison impossible. For example, it is possible that Latino UCB undergrads accept at higher rates than other groups, and/or stay longer once accepted within the BSC, and this may vary on other dimensions such as 15 house vs. Rochdale and Fenwick residence.

For example, among UCB undergrads, 43% of Latinos , 68% of Asians, and 73% of whites living in Rochdale or Fenwick vs. 34% of Latinos, 37% of Asians and 43% of whites living in the 15 houses entered the BSC prior to Summer 2011, suggesting complex relationships between race/ethnicity, residence, and longevity.

Although beyond the scope of this current study, exploring the reasons behind Asian origin applicant underrepresentation is critical to attract more Asian-origin students to the BSC, to greater reflect Asian-origin proportions on the UCB campus.

Choosing to Live in the BSC

Although most BSC UCB undergrad members heard about the BSC only through word-of-mouth, reasons for choosing to live in the BSC differed greatly by residence:

Top 2 Reasons Members Chose to Live in the BSC:

	Rochdale & Fenwick UCB undergrads	15 houses UCB undergrads
#1 Reason	Cost (87%)	Cost (31%); Cooperative experience (31%)
#2 Reason	Location (33%) Guaranteed single room (32%)	Social life at the coops (24%)

Table 4
Source: BSC Census 2012

Cost

Cost was mentioned as the number one reason for choosing to live in the BSC among both Rochdale and Fenwick apartment UCB undergrads and those living in the 15 houses. However, the proportions reporting this top reason were strikingly different; almost 90% of Rochdale and Fenwick UCB undergrads reported cost as their number 1 motivator, while a little less than a third of the 15 house UCB undergraduate reported cost, which tied with the cooperative experience.

The high proportion of UCB undergraduate members in Rochdale and Fenwick reflects both their socio-economic disadvantage and their higher reliance on loans than counterparts in the 15 houses; any significant cost saving measure reduces loan dependence, and housing is a huge cost to students.

Location and Single room

Among Rochdale and Fenwick UCB undergrads, location and guaranteed single rooms tied at just under a third of members reporting that as their second most favored reasons for choosing to live in the BSC. These reasons hardly appeared among UCB undergrads in the 15 houses who prefer the cooperative experience and the coop social life over location; single rooms are not guaranteed within the 15 houses and many members must wait to earn them or win them by the luck of the draw.

The Cooperative Experience, Social Life, and Making New Friends

In Focus Group discussion the preference to live in an environment conducive for making new friends and socializing – across race/class lines came up quite often in the 15 houses, but not in Rochdale and Fenwick, where people pointed out they already had friend networks (most often within the Latino student groups that predominate) and full social lives.

For example:

- A female, Asian origin student living in a house described how she lived in a dorm full of ‘people who looked like her’ during her freshman year, and she specifically wanted to live with other types of people – and she sought out the BSC for that experience.

Many persons of color actively sought this diversity of viewpoint, color etc.

In the 15 houses, those who mentioned family and other adults who lived in the coops often stressed their attraction to ‘the cooperative experience.’

For example:

- A male, white student living in a house mentioned that his mother used to live in the BSC, and how he was interested in the cooperative lifestyle and the diversity of expression and thought that the lifestyle encompasses.
- A male, Asian origin living in a house wanted mentioned high school teacher motto: “There’s time to experience everything, and it’s called college.” He chose to live in the room and board coops because he wanted to ‘get a taste for what’s out there’, including the cooperative lifestyle.

In the 15 houses, diversity of viewpoints and atmosphere of greater tolerance mentioned in most groups as a valuable part of coop life, and one that people across race/ethnic and socio-economic lines mentioned was important to them.

Concerns about ‘White’ and ‘Economic’ Privileges

Persons of color in the 15 houses reported a general sense of openness and acceptance from the larger BSC community, but a significant number voiced concerns about ‘white privilege’ and ‘economic privilege’ that goes unchecked and at times permeates life within

the 15 houses. White privilege was defined a BSC member as the ‘systematic privilege given to white bodies’ and, I suggest, the ideas, opinions, and desires of individuals in white bodies. Economic privilege is defined here as the privilege given to persons of higher economic backgrounds.

In the case of the 15 houses, the majority of the houses are composed of white members, and most of those white members come from middle income or higher backgrounds, contrasting with the persons of color who tend to originate from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds. Race and economic status (‘class’) are wrapped together in a not-so-neat package, especially given that persons of color in the 15 houses, though of less advantaged backgrounds than whites within the houses, are more advantaged than their counterparts in Rochdale and Fenwick.

This ‘white privilege’ is expressed implicitly and may manifest in a number of ways, on one or more dimensions of privilege. For example, many persons of color within the 15 houses discussed a party that occurred at one of the large houses in the recent past, with the theme of ‘Slow Jams’. Slow jams is a musical genre with strong influences from Rhythm and Blues and Soul music, both traditionally tied to the African-American community. Many persons attending the party dressed up as ‘thugs’ and ‘gang-bangers’. Many persons of color were offended because they perceived the theme as a vehicle for stereotyping the African-American community, and by extension other persons of color. The persons of color felt that whites, who sit at the top of the race hierarchy, were unaware of the effect of their actions on persons of color, who have been stereotyped and discriminated against to detrimental effect across American (and world) history.

‘Economic privilege’ was another concern.. In another instance, a white female, self-described as from a lower socio-economic background illustrated this in a discussion about the house’s ‘Special dinner’. Some individuals wanted to charge guests \$10 to enter the event, while others felt that guests are invited and should not have to pay a fee to be invited to a friends’ home. At one point, a frustrated member said, ‘It’s just \$10 dollars! That’s not a lot’. As the member describing the event pointed out, \$10 may not be much to some people, but it may be a problematic amount for others. Individuals with more economic means did not consider the needs of other, less advantaged members.

Perceptions of House Coop Life among Rochdale and Fenwick BSC members

In focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews, Rochdale and Fenwick UCB undergraduates expressed little interest for living in the 15 houses. Part of this was a perception of cost; boarding adds to the cost and most felt they could manage for less. Part of this was a perception of space; one female Latina in Rochdale/Fenwick asked “Why would you pay more to share a room with someone in a house when you can get your own room in an apartment?”

Several focus group respondents in Rochdale and Fenwick mentioned the importance of living near ‘people like me’ who understood their experiences and ‘where they were coming

from' – first generation college students from a minority group and disadvantaged economic backgrounds.

But another prevalent theme mentioned among Rochdale and Fenwick members, though not shared by all, was a perception of BSC houses as a dirtier version of dorm life with more drugs. An 'us versus them' theme underpinned much of the conversation – people of color live in the apartments, the BSC houses are dominated by whites and not particularly welcoming to persons of color. However, only 12% of Rochdale/Fenwick members ever lived in the BSC houses, so most did not have any first-hand experience with house life, and much of the focus group discussions centered on perceptions of life in the 15 houses.

For those who lived in the BSC houses, experiences may be mixed. Two Rochdale/Fenwick members in the focus groups or one-on-one interviews lived in one of the 15 houses prior to moving into the apartments; one Latino male had extremely fond memories of his time and friendships there, but wanted to move into the apartments because of shifting house dynamics and a desire for independence.

A Latina female who lived in a mid-sized BSC house had more mixed feelings; she made some great friendships, but complained about food politics, wanting to be around more Latinos, and the difficulty of sharing space with so many other people. She also described her inability to get dorm space and turning to the BSC as an alternative.

Perceptions of Rochdale and Fenwick Apartments among 15 house members

BSC UCB undergrads within the 15 houses also had different views about the Rochdale and Fenwick apartments. As described above, members in the 15 houses find the cooperative experience and social life important attractions of BSC room and board house life. A few didn't know that the BSC included apartments; they thought the BSC only included room and board houses. Others felt that life in the apartments lacked the 'cooperative experience', was isolating and not conducive for socializing – the opposite of the lifestyle they were searching for.

An 'us versus them' theme also emerged here; Rochdale and Fenwick were seen as places for people who were not interested in a cooperative lifestyle, and many mentioned the priority status for Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) students, which many perceived as advantaging students only for Rochdale and Fenwick, but not for other BSC residences (but in fact EOP priority, which gives preference for a verified EOP applicant/member above members with the same number of points, holds for all BSC residences). Members in the 15 houses seem to perceive Rochdale and Fenwick as a place reserved for persons of color, because of the EOP priority – assuming that EOP generally includes only persons of color, and more specifically, Latinos.

A note about EOP status and Pell grant receipt

It is interesting to note, however, that most EOP students at UCB are of Asian-origin, 1,451 or 48% of all EOP participants in 2009-2010 (Source: personal correspondence with

Arthur Gong from the UCB Office of Planning and Analysis). Given the fact that 80% of Rochdale and Fenwick members in Spring 2012 are EOP participants, but over 77% of the UCB undergrad population in these apartments are Latino, Asian-origin EOP students are not proportionately represented within that 80%. Across the board, Asians are underrepresented in the BSC.

Latinos accounted for 34% of all EOP participants at UCB campus, with 1,039 participants and more whites (256) were enrolled in the program than African Americans (149).

The total number of EOP participants at UCB campus were 3,046 in 2009-2010, the latest year of data available. If that number stayed constant, then the BSC, with 399 verified EOP participants in Spring 2012 housed 13% of all EOP participants!

Pell grant eligibility, as verified by UC is one of three components of EOP eligibility (see appendix for more details). Although the BSC Census 2012 did not ask respondents to identify their EOP status, it did inquire about Pell grant receipt. The same trend of underrepresentation of Asian Pell grant recipients can be seen among UCB undergrad members of the BSC in the following table, comparing UCB undergrads on campus in 2009-2010.

Table 4

Pell Grant Recipients	*UCB Undergrads (2009-10)	**BSC UCB undergrads (Spring 2012)
African American	6%	2%
Native American/Alaskan Native	1%	3%
Chicano/Latino	22%	58%
Asian	45%	13%
White	19%	23%
Not reported/other	6%	1%
*Source: personal correspondence with Arthur Gong from the UCB Office of Planning and Analysis (OPA); this is the latest year available		
** Source: BSC Census 2012		

Asians and African-Americans are underrepresented even among the Pell grant recipients who live within the BSC, while Latinos are overrepresented. Available word-of-mouth networks may unintentionally exclude African-American and Asian origin Pell grant recipients, while privileging Latino Pell Grant recipients.

Potential Drawbacks/Barriers to House Living

Food Politics

Food politics, or concerns about local origin, organic, non-processed foods came up as divisive point within the BSC, and one that transcended race/ethnic groups but seemed to cross-cut economic groups. Vegetarianism and veganism are a part of food politics. Food politics are

not prominent within all house cultures; some members remarked specifically that their house was ‘not into food politics’ and kitchen management goes to great lengths to accommodate member preferences.

Negative Food Politics

For many members, food politics are aggressive and privileged to those with the economic means to take the origins of their food into account; it’s a turn off.

For example:

One house member described how house management was trying to turn the house into vegetarians, even when many were opposed to that.

- In another case, a female, white, self-identified lower income living in a house reported that management would not buy cereals that were sugary, unhealthy, and ‘disgusting’, even though many people in the house wanted them.

Persons from lower-income backgrounds less happy with this; sometimes race/class intersected because of the predominance of lower income backgrounds among some racial groups within the houses.

For example:

- Female, Latina, self-identified lower income living in Roch/Fen (formerly in a house): “I don’t care about organic. I’m just trying to eat. They didn’t eat the kind of food I liked there.” She went to on to explain that the house did provide the type of food she liked to eat, they might have a ‘Mexican’ food night once a week, but as she explained, “For me, every night is Mexican food night” and that’s what she preferred.
- Female, African origin, self-identified lower income in house described her disbelief in how seriously food politics; not so important to her family and people with less income
- A male, Latino living in a house: “I’m okay with being a minority. I’m used to it. But the food pisses me off..”

Positive Food Politics

Others were specifically drawn to the BSC coops because of their conscientious and sustainable food choices and friendliness to vegetarians and vegans. Organic, ‘healthy’, high quality food options were hailed by many BSC members as an important, and positive, aspect of living within the BSC.

For example:

- A male, Latino vegetarian living in a house remarked that “The coops are more environmentally friendly, and have lots of organic food options. That’s important to me.”

Cost - affordable, low-cost to whom?

Apartments with guaranteed single rooms are viewed as cheaper and as more ‘bang for the buck’ among Rochdale and Fenwick members, although a few thought the cost of the apartments were too high. BSC houses were considered too expensive, particularly because of the boarding option and the lack of a single room.

Regardless of how they perceived the costs, the majority of UCB undergrads within Rochdale and Fenwick are strapped with debt burdens: 63% are taking out loans, versus only 38% of individuals within the 15 houses. Loans particularly affect students with the most financial need; 55% of UCB undergrads in Rochdale and Fenwick receive both Pell grants and loans while only 17% of the UCB undergrads within the 15 houses do. These statistics suggest that students are very aware of costs and search for economical housing to help reduce their need to take out more loans.

A few of the 15 house members also complained that costs were relatively high and should be lowered. On the other hand, most BSC members, in Rochdale and Fenwick as well as the 15 houses remarked that BSC costs were quite economical, especially compared to the dorms.

Cleanliness, Habitability

Another recurrent theme among the houses was cleanliness and habitability. For many in the larger houses especially, it was a turn off, or something you ‘learn to live with’. Most members in smaller or medium sized houses remarked that they had no problem with cleanliness, and many bragged about their house cleanliness.

For example:

- Male, White living in a house: “You know someone’s eventually going to clean it up.”
- Male, Asian-origin living in a house: “My brother sent me pictures from apartments on Craig’s list” after helping move in and being turned off by the coop ‘messiness’. But the member himself was not deterred and was happy living in the coops.
- Female, Asian-origin living in a house: “Our house is great – it’s one of the cleaner ones.”

Social networks

Literature suggests that among college students, social networks tend to run along race/ethnic lines, and often along socio-economic lines. The prevalence of white students within the 15 houses and Latino students within the undergraduate apartments may be perpetuated by the word-of-mouth method of hearing about the coops that most BSC members report. This may partially explain the lack of applicants from certain race/ethnic groups (Asian-origin and African-

origin) and the general membership underrepresentation of others, such as UCB undergraduate engineering majors.

Summary of Reasons for Choosing to Live in the BSC among Rochdale and Fenwick vs. 15 house members: Searching for different lifestyles

- Rochdale and Fenwick UCB undergrads desire single rooms in an affordable residence close to campus, driven much by preferences students from households with lower than middle-income brackets.
- UCB undergrad responses from the 15 house cluster show a trend of desiring a social, cooperative experience, driven much by preferences of students from households with middle-and-higher income brackets.
 - Individuals are less involved in non-BSC student organizations; this is particularly true among Latino and African-origin students living in the 15 houses who report much lower involvement than their counterparts in Roch/Fen
 - Food policies, environmental sustainability are reported alternatively as positive or negative aspect of living in the 15 houses
 - Social life conducive to making friends, socializing, and a diverse atmosphere with a variety of viewpoints are important aspects of and attractions to community life within the 15 coops

**Recommendations regarding the BSC Strategic Plan:
(Numbers refer to specific points within the BSC Strategic Plan; see Plan for more details)**

2. Increase accessibility of our co-ops to prospective members

Data Collection:

‘2. h. Increase the ability of the BSC to understand the needs and composition of its members, perhaps through collecting demographic information of our members.’

- Change wording: 2. h. Increase the ability of the BSC to understand the needs and composition of its members *by collecting and analyzing socio-demographic information of our members....* i.e. by capturing it with the new housing software or an annual BSC Census.
 - BSC (student or regular) staff person(s) should be assigned to this task to ensure its implementation and analysis.
- The BSC currently does request basic demographic information from new members with the New Member Survey. Continuing to collect this survey would be very helpful to data collection efforts as well. It is important that a BSC student/regular staff person be appointed to analyze the data and report to Board/other BSC leaders on each semester.
- See appendix for specific recommendations about questionnaire wording, in order to assure data that is most comparable to UCB data.

‘1. b. Re-assess current methods of exit documents, etc for student executives’

- 1.b. ‘Re-assess current methods of exit documents, etc for student executives’
 - Collect data on the student leadership, e.g. Board, Cabinet, EACom and other committees.
 - Collecting data on students leadership allows us to understand who is leading the BSC, and if there are race/ethnic or socio-economic gaps between members and leaders that might lead to BSC policies that are not in line with member needs and opinions
- Add a new bullet point to this section: ‘Re-establish administering exit surveys to outgoing BSC members’
 - Administering surveys to BSC members will help us understand who is leaving the BSC and why, and if there are socio-economic, racial, other trends or patterns of which we should be aware to take action.

2. Increase accessibility of our co-ops to prospective members

Pell grant recipients:

Prioritize Pell grant recipients above others with equal numbers of points (similar to EOP, DSP status)

Central-level boarding:

Remove the ability to ‘buy’ a partial BSC point or prioritize those with EOP, DSP and other statuses over Central-Office level boarders

Rental costs:

Find ways to lower the cost of rent at BSC houses

Food Politics

Consider how aggressive policing of food affects house culture, perceptions of the BSC coops, stock of the application pool, and member retention

Habitability

2.b. ‘Increase standards for habitability to ensure that we take good care of our property.’

- Consider how cleanliness affects house culture, perceptions of the BSC coops, stock of the applicant pool and member retention.
- Address cleanliness by identifying houses that need the most repair and maintenance. Identify and approve house improvement projects that improve habitability.

Next steps:

1. Create Marketing/Outreach Plan
2. Hire a marketing consultant to collaborate with appropriate BSC staff, Board of Directors, committee members and student staff

- a. Use the BSC Census 2012 socio-demographic findings and analysis as the launch point
3. Focus on addressing potential social network barriers and reduce misperceptions about the BSC, especially among groups underrepresented in the BSC (middle income students, Asian-origin and African-origin students, UCB undergraduate engineering majors)
 - a. 2.e. 'Re-assess how houses are marketed to the outside world (ie the descriptions on the BSC website, expand recruitment strategies)'
 - b. 2.f. 'Outreach to a diverse array of student organizations'
 - i. Design outreach specifically to include African-origin and Asian-origin students and student organizations

Future Directions:

This study focuses on internal dynamics and mechanisms underlying the socio-demographic differences between residences within the BSC; an exploration of the impressions and information of students who are not part of the BSC, particularly Asian origin students, should be undertaken.

In addition, it would be interesting to compare the racial diversity within houses with their 'reputations'. Do 'cleaner' or more 'quiet' houses attract more racial/ethnic and socio-economic diversity? Or is the opposite true? Is this true for some houses, but not for others?

Appendix

EOP status is defined as:

- Low Income (Pell Grant eligible as verified by UCB Financial Aid)
 - First Generation College Student (neither parent has received a 4-year degree in the United States)
 - California Resident (or Tribally registered Native American from any state)
- (Source : Student Life Advising Services, UCB <http://slas.berkeley.edu/what.html>)

DSP status is defined as:

- Persons with a visual, hearing, learning, mobility, psychological or other disabilities that have been certified by the UCB DSP program
- (Source: Disabled Students Program; UCB <http://dsp.berkeley.edu/verification.html>)

Methodology and Assumptions:

Race/ethnic categories*	<p>If a respondent chose more than one race, they are categorized in the order below.</p> <p>E.g. Hispanic & African American=Hispanic; African-American & Asian=African-American; Asian & White=Asian</p> <p>* Please note that race/ethnic categories includes 'international students' as a separate race/ethnic category. This follows the UC Berkeley method of reporting; please see http://opa.berkeley.edu/statistics/cds/2010-2011.pdf for an example.</p>
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	Hispanic or Latino origin, can be any race. Includes individuals with family origins from Mexico, Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean.
<i>African origin, non-Hispanic</i>	African origin including African-American, Black, or African, non-Hispanic
<i>Asian, non-Hispanic</i>	Asian origin individuals, including Pacific Islanders, non-Hispanic
<i>Native American/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic</i>	Native American or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic
<i>White[^], non-Hispanic</i>	White, non-Hispanic, includes persons of European, North African and Middle Eastern ancestry [^] .
	[^] Whites includes persons with origins from North Africa/Middle East such as Yemen, Egypt, Morocco, Syria, Iran, Lebanon etc; see http://opa.berkeley.edu/statistics/cds/2010-2011.pdf

	<p>^Respondents who chose only the race/ethnic category 'other' and wrote in a Middle Eastern/North African/European country-of-origin were recorded as 'white, non-Hispanic'</p> <p>A person of any race/ethnic category or country-of-origin who reports international student status.</p>
<i>International Student</i>	
<i>Totals</i>	Totals in the race/ethnicity column add to 100 (+ or -1 due to rounding) and are the sum of the race/ethnic categories plus international students - which is its own distinct 'race/ethnic' category.

BSC Census 2012

Because of the lower response rate of males in the survey (see Table 1), and the differential response rates between residences (see Table 2), survey weights were created to infer general population statistics of the BSC using a raking method in STATA. Although many member characteristics have never been collected by the BSC prior to the BSC Census 2012 and are unknown, such as race/ethnicity, socio-economic background, and financial aid status, the sex ratio and proportion of members living in each residence is collected and known. These weights adjust for non-response of the 346 members who did not respond to the survey, making the assumption that non-responder characteristics are similar to respondent characteristics. Survey weights were used to calculate all member statistics, with the exception of self-reported gender identity. Self-reported gender identity may deviate from BSC Housing Department reports of gender identity because some people in the census chose not to self-report any identity and some chose an identity that differed from BSC Housing Dept. reports. Those without a male/female identity were given a weight of 0; this included approximately 40 individuals or 4% of the sample.

A few other notes about assumptions:

Many EAP students did not choose any other academic standing besides 'EAP' so it is difficult to determine if they are graduate or undergraduate students. However, because most EAP students at Cal are enrolled in undergraduate-level classes (even though some may be involved in the equivalent of master's level graduate-level study in their home university), they are classified in this analysis as undergraduates. If they attend Cal, they are included in the comparisons discussed in this report.

Sample size:

The BSC population includes 1,256 members, 910 of whom responded to the survey. In general, population statistics are well developed in sample of 1,000 or more, and this sample approximates 1,000.

However, when we break down the categories into sub-populations, such as race/ethnic group, and we further break down the analyses to include more subgroups, such as when we examine the 11-category parental earnings among African-Americans in the 15 houses, numbers can be quite small. With such small numbers, our data lacks power for us to be confident in the results that we find, and the results are likely to reflect variance. Nonetheless, we can use the results to suggest trends.

The parental/personal income variable is the most affected in the dataset, but the Census also asked respondents to report their socio-economic status growing up. This is not a perfect solution, because socio-economic status ‘growing up’ may differ from current status, but again, we can use the information to suggest trend and points of comparison.

BSC Focus Groups and Interviews

BSC Focus Groups and interviews were conducted to learn about member experiences regarding cost, boarding, diversity, cleanliness and other aspect of BSC living. Focus groups are not meant to be statistically representative of member experiences; their purpose is to flesh out themes that arise. Themes discussed in this report were ones that were mentioned most often and at most length.

Focus Groups were conducted at 12 houses and the 2 south side apartments (reported as one group in the appendix Figure 1). The CODA (Coordinator for Outreach, Diversity and Accessibility) co-facilitated 6 Focus Groups with the PMI and facilitated 3 Focus Group discussions. The rest of the Focus groups were conducted solely by the PMI.

Focus Group Recruitment:

Members in Rochdale and Fenwick were offered a ½ hour workshift credit in exchange for their participation in a focus group. The Rochdale/Fenwick workshift managers emailed members about the opportunity and members emailed to sign up for this special workshift.

Members in the 15 houses were generally contacted via an email from the house president, house manager, or other house member. The project management intern (PMI) sent emails to house presidents and house managers requesting to hold a Focus group during dinner at a specific date, and house managers and house presidents often, but not always passed this through house council before replying ‘yes’. The focus group was advertised to house members by the house manager, house president, or other main point of contact. The CODA (Coordinator for Outreach, Diversity, and Accessibility) was essential in helping gain access to houses; many house managers ignored requests for Focus Groups until the CODA introduced the PMI to particular house managers via email.

BSC Applicant Pool Data

Applicant pool data were derived from the BSC online application data spanning September 2010-February 2012. Information on 6,600 applicants is available. However, the pool was constricted to 4,093 for the analysis, using the following restrictions:

Only those claiming UCB undergraduate status (or EAP status) in the application are included in the analysis, to ensure a proper comparison with UCB undergraduate, a main focus of this report.

Furthermore, many individuals in the file may have not completed the application process, and they are removed from the analysis; only those who paid the application fee, demonstrating their true intent to apply, are included.

The applicant pool should not be directly compared with the BSC membership and should only be used for analyzing applicant pool trends.

Other Data Sources:

Statistics regarding UCB undergraduates come from the UCB Office of Planning and Analysis.

See links for more details:

<http://opa.berkeley.edu/statistics/UndergraduateProfile.pdf>

<http://opa.berkeley.edu/surveys/UCUES/2011/2011Part2.html>

http://campaign.berkeley.edu/lib/pdf/UCBerkeley_undergraduate_scholarships_case.pdf

<http://opa.berkeley.edu/surveys/UCUES/2011/2011Part1.html>

<http://opa.berkeley.edu/statistics/cds/2010-2011.pdf>

<http://opa.berkeley.edu/statistics/enrollmentData.html>

Recommendations regarding future questionnaires:

Questionnaire Wording: Recommendations for the New Member Survey and any future data collection (e.g. another Census)

The current BSC New Member Survey does a great job of collecting basic demographic data of members, and can serve as an important tool and resource. To ensure the collection of data that can be directly compared to UCB, a few changes to the current wording of the New Member Survey (and the Census, if it is utilized again) are in order.

Academic standing questions:

Current choices:

Phd student/PostDoc, - PhDs and postdocs should be placed in separate categories.

EAP – EAP students should be asked ‘Are you taking mostly undergraduate-level classes this semester?’. Many EAP students fail to identify their academic standing as anything but ‘EAP’, so asking this question will ensure that we categorize EAP students correctly as undergraduates or graduate students.

Gender:

Should include: bisexual, gay, lesbian, heterosexual/straight, queer, questioning, transgender and other.