

College of Natural Resources

EBI Student Forum

April 16, 2007

These are notes on questions and concerns taken by the facilitator at the student forum on the EBI convened at the College of Natural Resources on April 16, 2007. CNR Dean Paul Ludden was in attendance, in a "listening" role -- answering only a very few questions. The meeting was facilitated by CNR student Hillary Lehr.

Outline:

1. Questions
2. Corporations at Cal
3. Oversight

Questions:

How will risks of research agenda and how it is set be addressed?

Do we have any say in what is researched in BP section?

Who is accountable?

For research

For the effects of the research

Will the proposal compromise the research of grad students (due to proprietary attachments)?

How will publication of research be affected granted BP's involvement?

How will concerns raised at today's forum be compiled and presented to the public domain?

Who will be holding spin-off corporations accountable?

- Will the information about the people involved who have shares in these businesses be made public?
- How much oversight will the UC have over research?
- How can we be sure that BP will not make similar mistakes as in the past with this research (esp. our role at this moment in relation to environmental sustainability)?
- How does this deal affect academic policies at UCB (e.g. enrollment, research etc.)?
- Will the Administration engage with us in handling our concerns?
- Is the Administration entertaining the possibility that this deal may tarnish its reputation?
- Are we going to trust in BP to resolve the energy resource crisis in a democratic way?
- Will there be research on the effects of cellulosic ethanol/GMV's etc. In a socio-economic perspective?
- Will there be guarantees under EBI?
- Why wasn't there an open decision-making process earlier?
- Were the Michigan State University Study/recommendations considered?
- Where/How will we be able to address future questions?

Corporations at Cal:

Summary: Input focused on two issues: BP's proprietary research in campus facilities, and suitability of BP itself as a corporate partner. There were concerns about the proprietary research setting a precedent for using large amounts of public University space for private use by corporate employees, space and personnel over which the public has no oversight or control. Others emphasized the opportunity to access new technologies and information coming from the BP scientists as a positive outcome. There was a lack of trust in BP as a corporate partner-- some mentioned a disconnect between their public image and their recent record.

On-campus BP personnel

Proprietary Research: sets a new precedent

No access, no control (faculty and student)

Catering vs. public good

Purpose: free exchange of ideas

(ex. Novartis effect = need o.k.)

Structure, say

Transparency

Publication

Access to facilities

The new structure

Chance to work with new equipment vs. changing publications and grad students

Climate change is our responsibility

Transparency

Corporations as partners

Are all corporations bad?

The need for proper oversight

The need for proper focus

BP's human rights record

Questions about the effects of biofuels

Oversight:

Summary: The main focus in this section was on the governance of the EBI, how it would be shared between BP and the participating public institutions, and how conflicts between BP's interest and the interest of the public and/or the University would be resolved. There were concerns about BP's control of all aspects of the institute, from publications (minor) to choice of research direction and funding (major). There was also concern over the lack of any mechanism for oversight over BP's decisions. Students wondered if there was a process for reviewing or even refusing the contract with BP, and expressed the desire for a binding process to ensure the public good was kept at the forefront and to enact the precautionary principle. Some expressed concern at how the EBI could influence others' views of UCB as an independent institution, and many expressed the opinion that it was more in line with the role of a public university to seek public funding for projects of this scale. It was also mentioned that review and oversight by UCB's administration did not hold credibility for some as a stand-in for public oversight.

Evaluate consistency in socio-env. Issues

Evaluate corporate responsibility

Workers safety, legality

Process for review, refusal

Binding process for ensuring public good

Ramifications, impact

Teeth and obligations

Public good

Limitations to ensure publication rights

IP interests delay publications

Enforce no other delay

Need a process to appeal refusals

Precedent for deprivatization

Accountability process that is participatory

UCB needs money, giving up of our values

Specific to this deal

BP should be doing it on own

Administration vs. Full University

Oversight is not enough

Debate carries no weight

Need a way to engage concerns

Where is the space for the University to consider if this deal is not for us

Funding... need to demand gov. \$. Admin should pressure

This is an opportunity to change, to increase democracy

Racist implications of lack of participation by third world residents

UCB requires BP do right? For history

How to ensure BP won't commit same errors as the past

Is this possible

If biofuels are bad, how does this affect UCB's image? Recruitment?

Be proud to not need corporate funding

How do we reinvent sustainability to not repeat mistakes of the past?

Agenda, intention, purpose of BP and UBC not aligned

Understanding lessons of Green revolution

Scientists want to help

Address other alternative sources

Don't want to harm, but do need to research

Need precautionary requirement

Address that we are aiding climate warming if we help facilitate and increase fossil fuel extraction (two labs)

Who gets to define progress and efficiency

Space for regional applications, stakeholder input?

Need to understand socio-economic context before implementation

Need social science up front.

Concern over second Manhattan Project

How to give input?

(debate followed)