



VAN DERMYDEN MADDUX
Investigations Law Firm

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CLIMATE ASSESSMENT INTERVIEWS

University of California, Davis
Concerning California Aggie Marching Band
August 23, 2019

I. Brief Introduction

On May 14, 2019, Van Dermyden Maddux Law Corporation (Firm) commenced an independent climate review for the University of California, Davis (UC Davis). The review arose from allegations of hazing, assault, and misconduct brought forward by individuals associated with the Cal Aggie Marching Band (CAMB or Band-Uh!).

For the first phase of the review, we conducted a survey of current and former members of CAMB. The Firm transmitted the survey electronically to 574 current and former members of CAMB on June 18, 2019. The survey closed on July 2, 2019 with a 58% response rate. The survey responses are the subject of a separate report, dated August 2, 2019.

For the second phase, we interviewed current and former members of CAMB to gain additional perspectives to supplement the online survey. This is the Executive Summary of those interviews. It is not intended to be a comprehensive recitation of information gathered. Instead, it provides an overview of the investigative methodology and a summary of the major themes which were the focus of those interviewed.

As with the online survey, we received a wide range of responses. Some individuals describe an early deep love for the band, followed by traumatic experiences and disillusionment about the band's culture. Other individuals describe an imperfect, but safe and supportive environment. For some, "bias" and "exaggeration" cast recent complaints into doubt, while most recognized opportunities for improvement.

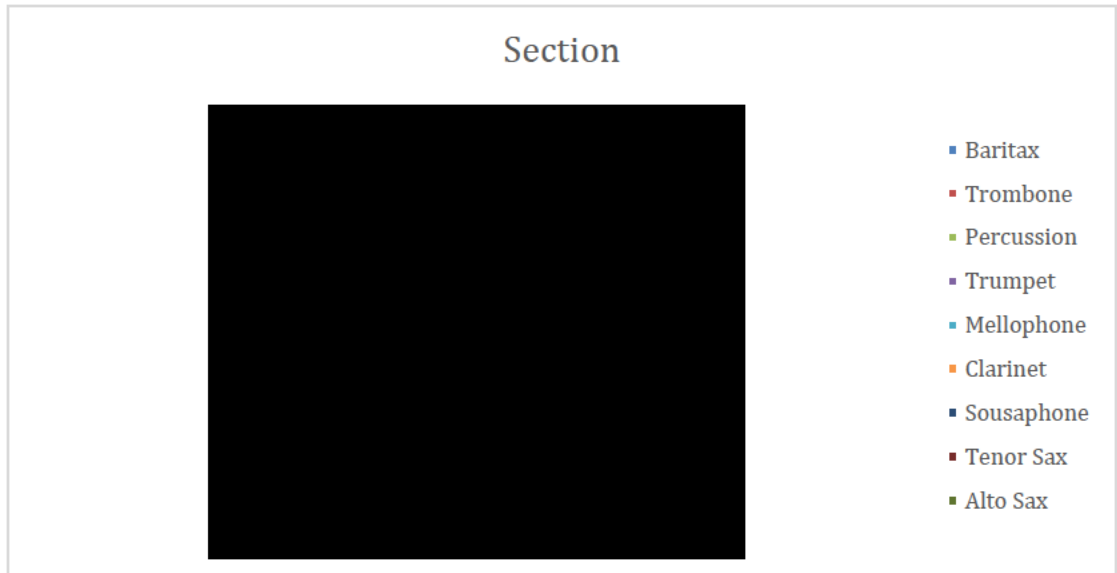
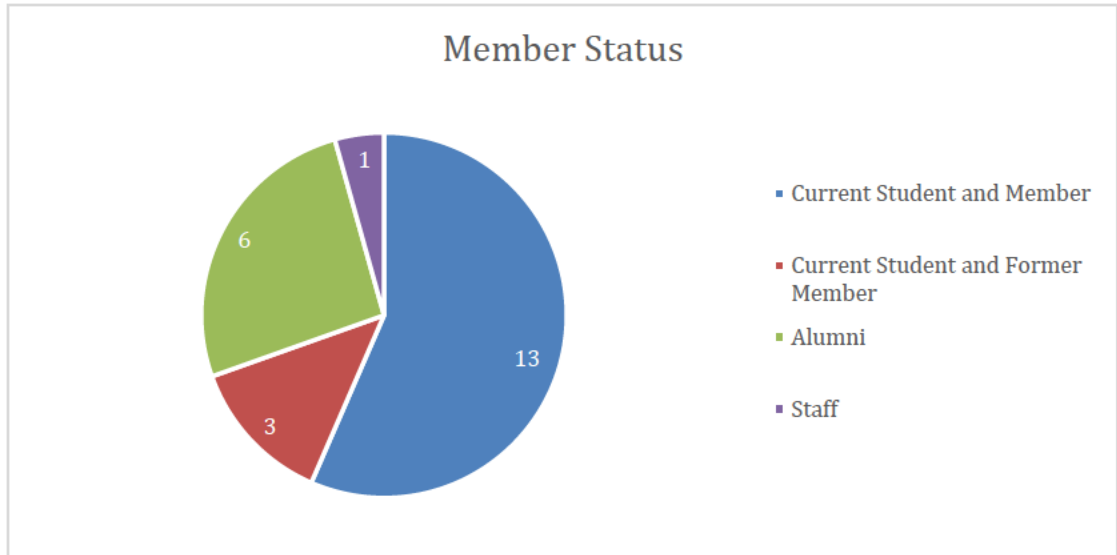
We reviewed, considered, and measured the comments received over many hours of interviews. This report reflects perceptions of band members across many sections, ages, genders, and levels of experience. We note there is an expected level of critical feedback in a review of this type. By undertaking this review, UC Davis expressed an interest in enhancing the climate in CAMB. We believe the online results, coupled with this summary of in-person perspectives, will identify challenges and opportunities for promoting a more inclusive and safe environment moving forward.

II. The Methodology

We received 335 responses to the June 2019 online survey. Of these, 103 participants volunteered to be interviewed. We selected 23 individuals to interview. Our goal was to identify individuals who provided detailed, candid, and reflective perspectives. We included both current and former CAMB members. We also attempted to hear perspectives from band members of different genders, experience level, and section in CAMB. In addition to the interviews, we reviewed documents provided by UC Davis or those interviewed.

UC Davis and its representatives allowed us discretion to conduct this review as we determined to be necessary. No person interfered with, or attempted to influence, the information contained in this Executive Summary.

The below charts illustrate the number of in-person interviews conducted based on member status and sections in CAMB.¹



III. Summary Of Themes

The report regarding the online survey results detailed many of CAMB’s customs and traditions highlighted in various media outlets from March to May 2019. In the survey responses, some participants expressed they felt unfairly vilified by the negative views the anonymous media

¹ The second chart reflects that the total number of witnesses tallied by section is greater than the total number of witnesses because some witnesses participated in more than one section during their time in CAMB.

sources took toward all aspects of the band’s culture. Many participants agreed CAMB’s culture is not perfect, but felt the media illustrated an image of the organization that lacked nuance. While most of the traditions and customs were not in dispute, participants perceived their impact differently. We heard the same mixed opinions from the in-person interviews. Fifteen interviewees either witnessed or believed the claims made about CAMB and the culture as a whole. In contrast, eight were skeptical, citing potential “bias” and “exaggeration.” As an example, one person expressed that they were “shocked,” because the claims “did not align” with their experience, while another shared, “When these stories came out, part of the band got really defensive, and part of the band wants to really change things to protect members.”

The interview process provided an opportunity to discuss experiences in detail, and also to identify and prioritize the greatest value and most critical challenges facing the organization, as well as areas where they believe the culture has been inaccurately portrayed. After synthesizing the information collected from approximately 35 hours of interviews, we next summarize the information in the following categories:

Positive Aspects of
CAMB Culture

The Critical
Challenges

Opportunities for
Improvement

A. Positive Aspects Of CAMB Culture

Those interviewed shared many positive aspects of CAMB. These included the community and support they felt, as well as the opportunity to play music. They also shared the collective impression that the culture in the band, while not perfect, is always evolving and improving.

Community. Many participants shared positive thoughts about the friendship, community, and support they experienced in CAMB. As examples:

- “I drove up for retreat. It lasted three days. They were really great. It was a really nice difference and change from high school. I had felt isolated due to personal circumstances in high school. This was different. They did group activities. I got to know people. I had a lot of positive experiences overall. It made me excited to go back for the fall. [...] High school was rough for me, and it felt great being around friends and a group of people I trusted. The camaraderie. I was looking for that and found it. It helped me stay healthy and positive. I stayed confident and found a better balance.”
- “My first year was amazing for me. I remember it very fondly. I had a lot of fun. I got out of my shell more. Before college, I had trouble being myself. Band helped me. I didn’t feel judged for anything. I made best friends. There were times specific people made me feel uncomfortable. Never the group as a whole. My section was the biggest factor that made me feel the way I did. Not necessarily the whole band made me happy. But my section. I spent the most time with them. [...] I enjoyed myself [during gatherings of the whole

band]. Hanging out with friends. I never felt like anyone was making me do anything I didn't want to do. That's in part because my section was there. I felt like I had already made friends prior to being there."

- "Friends, adventures, doing new things [are what I liked most about band]. As a freshman, they take you all around Davis. They tell you how to do college. One of my most favorite things is community and my least favorite thing is community. [...] It's definitely nice to go to college knowing a bunch of people when you don't know anyone yet. [...] At a lot of the parties, especially the small ones, I had a ton of fun. I made a lot of friends and made good memories at really small get-togethers. They were not so crazy [as the larger get-togethers]."
- "I personally came into band with no prior musical or marching experience. [...] I felt it was really easy for me to join even with my lack of musical experience. Retreat was compact and a little overwhelming. But I had nice section leaders who went out of their way to get me the help I needed. People had side lessons with me. I never felt shamed for not knowing how to play. And also, my section leaders then were cautious about making sure I felt comfortable. [...] Through the whole first year, I liked it. Even though I would just go and play random noises. Eventually, I took a music theory class at Davis. My band mates would help me with my homework. My section would go out to dinners. [...] The section was composed of a lot of people that didn't know how to play and wanted to try something new. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]."
- "[What did you enjoy about your experience in CAMB?] Mostly just the people. The moment I joined, it felt like everyone already knew me. Even though I joined late. I did not join the first semester and go to band camp. [REDACTED]. Everyone already knew each other, then I came in out of the blue like some people do. But everyone brought me in as though I had been there from the beginning. People were sweet, overall. [...] When I got there, they wanted freshmen to feel comfortable. That was a huge thing in my freshman year. They would check in and see how you were doing. [...] [M]y band mom invited me to the bonding. At one point, they started playing beer pong and asked me to play. I was excited and said yes. My band mom immediately said, 'You don't have to do this. You can also play with water.' I immediately felt like they were going to take care of me. I have a loving section, fairly welcoming. They never made me feel nervous."
- "You don't have to prove anything to be in band. You don't have to play an instrument to be in band; they'll accept you no matter. The point of the marching test is to take Davis wherever you go. We go to DC and you bring it with you. It was one of the cutest and most memorable parts of retreat. I wouldn't have enjoyed frosh year as much without band. I made my best friends in it. I can't imagine not being in band. I got a lot of good advice from the Uppers, the older members my freshman year."
- "[My experience the first year was] [p]retty positive. I had a positive experience. I always felt welcomed. People were being friendly with me, trying to hang out, make sure I was

getting acquainted. I found it easy to make friends. I have a few I'm still friends with today. It was overwhelmingly positive. There was no initiation. [...] It was always clear...there is no audition; you're in no matter your experience. They are willing to teach anyone. There are no obstacles to overcome."

- "The band is definitely not how the Aggie and Sac Bee described us. There are a lot of fun parts. It's very energetic. We perform at kids' parties or old people parties. Or go to away basketball games. People say, 'Oh, it's the Band-Uh!' We go to Anaheim, Huntington Beach. People ask us, 'Who are you?' And we say we are from UC Davis. It's my favorite part of being a band member. We promote our University. We have a lot of positive influence. [...] [O]verall, band was a very positive influence, in my life at least. All my friends are from band. All my social connections and fun activities are band-related. I can't allow the media to portray us like monsters because it's not true. Overall, I appreciate the time I spent in band. It was absolutely life-changing. Wonderful. I had my problems, but in the end, if the section leaders that wronged me invite me to their weddings, I would attend."

Playing Music. About a quarter of those interviewed noted that a great aspect of CAMB was the ability to play music and represent the University in a spirited way. As examples:

- "The part that keeps me there is playing my instrument. It's a group that performs; it's different from traditional marching bands and groups. My favorite part is being able to perform, and the way we do it. [...] It was actually CAMB that gave me the opportunity to play this instrument. I used to play [REDACTED], but it makes a big difference. I am just happy that we had an opening. At the time we joined, we only had four [REDACTED]. Coming from high school, I wanted to do something different. I was going to try [REDACTED]. But at retreat, seeing two current members on [REDACTED] – their performance convinced me and their ability to demonstrate how much they loved playing their instrument ... that made me want to be a part of that."
- "The essence of the band was to play music and that was always a treat."
- "I did like obviously the marching band part, playing my instrument and going to football games and doing gigs. [...] You get to spend time with friends, get to play music, get to have fun. It was a de-stressor."
- "I really like playing music. It was really fun playing with Band-Uh! They were very energetic, unlike other bands. I really love how we bring joy to the community, to other students, everywhere we go. Not only are we cheering for the team, but also just showing how great of a band we are performing-wise. [...] I would voluntarily choose to go to gigs instead of resting or studying. [...] It used to be a good and happy thing to do. I was so excited to see Uppers after Christmas break the first year. I was always happy to play gigs; I couldn't wait to make the listeners happy."

Culture Improving. About a third of those interviewed shared their impression that the band's culture, while not perfect, is always evolving and improving. They cited to recent changes in the

lyrics to songs, and elimination of some problematic traditions, as evidence. We heard, as examples:

- “In the past, the persona [the Coats] put on wasn’t nice. I wouldn’t say that is true now. Especially because they have been scrutinized recently.”
- “I think the issues of sexual assault concerns are really valid. People are much more careful, more inclined to step in and look after each other this past year. Articles say how alumni held on to toxic behaviors and pressured bandsmen into behaving a certain way. I think it’s better now that it is not acceptable for alumni to go to everything. I think the lack of alumni has made band grow closer and more supportive. I think earlier I mentioned switching was not normal. Now it is common. Half the officer council has switched sections. Now it is a culture of do what makes you happy. [...] Generally, band now is largely a lot better than what it used to be. A lot of the issues brought up in articles don’t necessarily hold up as true anymore. I think band itself has done a lot to fix these things. I think it is important those things were brought up. I think this review is helpful, but the current members are doing a lot better and caring about each other more now than in the past.”
- “It was definitely different [after freshman year] because there were things that were wrong with the band. There were creepy people. Instead of kicking people out, they would say ‘ignore them’ as I got older. [REDACTED] a Yacket or Coat. Those were people back in the day that used to do the sketchy things. I’m not going to deny it. But ours is a new era. That’s not what it reminded us of anymore. Every year we made goals to be known as something different. [...] We [in band leadership] did not want to be seen as rude and intimidating people. We wanted them to know we are the band and we love the school. We decided the reasons you would get a yacket would be different. I had an alum from the 70s come up and see me in a yacket say, ‘Which one are you, the bitch or the asshole?’ Back then, you would get yackets for way different reasons. Now we gave yackets if you played the best and loved the band. [...] We were also willing to incorporate more things like leadership days. We spent the summer doing leadership training on line. Making sure people were aware of gender expression and sexuality. It was taught to section leaders so they could disseminate the information. [...]”
- “There was a big crackdown fall quarter about who [the Coats] are. Keep in mind they changed; people with coats now are not at all who they were when I was a frosh. They’ve taken direction, are cheerful and happy, smiling at 5 a.m. call time. Happy to be there. They don’t do hymnal anymore. They’ve taken the direction of people who have the spirit of band, are friendly people you’d want to go with and hang out. [...] Traditions are always being phased out. If someone is uncomfortable, we phase it out. It’s not stagnant; it’s always moving. From this, we’ll have a bunch of ways we’ll improve. A bunch of people know this has been happening, so we can make moves towards fixing these issues.”
- “[W]e are a band that is evolving over time. I was saddened to see certain practices made people uncomfortable. We changed those things to be better since they left band.”

B. The Critical Challenges

The individuals we spoke with shared the challenges in CAMB culture which they found the most critical. These challenges included the conduct by Coats/Yackets, alumni interactions, concerns about reporting misconduct, sexual violence and sexual harassment, pressure to participate in on-band and off-band activities, and harmful traditions.

Coats/Yackets. A majority of interviewees agreed the Coats/Yackets are a significant source of conflict, and constitute one of the biggest obstacles to improving the organization's culture. These individuals cited to the Coats' propensity to sing "vulgar" songs and propagate "harmful" traditions. Some representative perspectives include:

- "I thought about the Yackets as the keepers of the underground traditions. Masters of off-band time, in a way. They ran parties. They organized a lot of things. They ran singing and other traditions. Because of that, they embody the counter-culture spirit. They're very grounded in the old style of, 'We don't listen to authority, we do things our own way,' and keep traditions even if they are toxic."
- "This one girl was very mad she didn't get one, so she reported all the Coats. So, then it was decided they could only wear coats at performances, not at parties. The next party the Coats showed up in all black, to make a point about the girl that reported them. Anyone in their right mind does not want the Coats to be around anymore. They don't do anything helpful, just hurtful."
- "I'm sure you have heard a lot about songs. At mavs, that stuck out to me a lot. Some of them were not bad. [...] Some are really, really bad. I think a lot of people in band claim we don't sing those songs anymore, but we definitely do. [...] They are gender studies majors, into activism, and being compassionate and empathetic. Once they have on coats and sunglasses, it doesn't matter where you lean, it is 1973 again in band."
- "So personally, the biggest thing that makes me uncomfortable are songs. [...] Explicit, raunchy songs. Last fall, the Coats were reported for this behavior. Before that, I was friends with some of the Coats. I was telling them they made me uncomfortable. Then two weeks later, they were reported. It's an event that not a lot of people like. The vast majority just tolerate it. Some alum really like it. 50 or 60 people just don't show up to things because of it."
- "It is a weird thing of giving them this power. I don't think it should happen in a band like this. Everyone should feel like they matter and are equally important. I think the only people who should have power are the elected leadership."

Alumni Interactions. About half of those interviewed shared that alumni presence was one of the most challenging obstacles to improving culture within CAMB moving forward. Specifically, they said alumni are more likely to propagate harmful traditions. They also shared concerns that alumni engage in "creepy" conduct toward young CAMB members without University oversight. Some of the perspectives included:

- “[Alumni] don’t want the band to change. From freshman year, you are encouraged to make alumni happy. Their opinions matter more than yours. On top of that, a lot of the alum band is pretty old and were in band when hazing was rampant and sexual assault didn’t matter to people. There were 40- to 50-year-old alums at parties with 17- to 18-year-olds. It was uncomfortable, but you can’t say anything because it will offend the alumni.”
- “With current members, it’s just more of a fun atmosphere and we know each other. But when alumni are being like that, it is like, ‘We didn’t go to school with you. We don’t know you. [REDACTED]. It’s weird that you are taking your shirt off and hitting on freshmen; they are not consenting.’ It feels like when they mix with young freshmen...it feels predatory.”
- “I don’t like having alumni during off-band time. It doesn’t matter what we are doing. There are alumni I know. I feel like sometimes having them around makes people uncomfortable. Not because they are creepy. But because they are a lot older. When I was a freshman at 18 and having a 24-year-old [around] felt weird at times.”
- “I feel like the biggest issue is the massive alumni presence. They go to the parties and want everything to be back. When we wanted to change the lyrics to a song to not be about domestic abuse, the alumni were upset, like, ‘Why are you so sensitive?’ The band could be suspended for a couple months, but it won’t diminish the alumni presence.”

Reporting Concerns. A little over a third of those interviewed shared CAMB members are either discouraged to report allegations of inappropriate conduct or, if they do report, little is accomplished in response to their concerns. Some of those interviewed cited to retaliation or fear of retaliation as a barrier to reporting. Most attributed this dynamic to the band’s collective fear that the organization could be investigated or suspended in response to allegations of misconduct. Some of the sentiments shared included:

- “I remember around the time the band ... one of my section leaders told us if we were contacted by the news to not tell them about the underage drinking. I thought that was really shady on her part, because she is a section leader. She told us to hide things to protect the band’s image.”
- “So, the hierarchy of reporting is [to start with] section leaders. But if things have been going on in Cabin and they were overseeing it, then reporting obviously fails. Then you would go to the officer council. Then the manager. They’re also in on everything, and partied with ... then you are supposed to report a sexual assault to this person? Of course, the University always pushes you toward the CARE office. They are the only people on campus you can talk to that are not mandated reporters. But even in that article for the Aggie, they said you are supposed to report to a section leader. But why would I tell a guy that is two years older than me? Apparently, they have handled a couple things where they banned people, but not in my experience.”
- “Lack of accountability [is the biggest problem]. Essentially band handles all problems internally, which does not always work. Same as a police officer shooting. The officer is

charged with wrongful shooting. The same people reviewing the shooting work in the officer's department end up saying, 'Oh, nothing is wrong.'"

- "It's definitely an understanding of, 'We deal with these things in house.' And bringing in law enforcement would be risky for the band. Like, 'We do things they wouldn't understand. We do things not in line with University policy. So, we cannot get University investigators involved.' So, because of that, people try to look out for each other. But not in a way that brings too much attention to what we are doing. Or the toxicity of things."
- "It's really dumb. You report to your band parent or section leader. You can report to a council member, but keep in mind that some of them are younger and less experienced than us. And often they are the most die-hard band people. Like if you go to them and say, 'I felt like I was hazed,' but they like that event, they will say, 'You should enjoy it, it's fun.'"

Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment. About a quarter of those interviewed felt concerns about sexual violence and sexual harassment were a critical challenge facing CAMB. As examples, we heard:

- "You can name anyone in the band and there is a story of how they were sexually assaulted. [...] All these things happened, but people don't report it because they want to protect the band. They know if they report, the band could be shut down. Such a shit mentality."
- "I couldn't count on my hands anymore how many people I knew who were sexually assaulted. Either who I knew or stories from before."
- "Someone who I know raped a girl last year is still in band [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]. Because people are so scared of band getting shut down, people hide everything. People still don't think what is going on now [the Climate Review] is warranted at all."

Pressure to Participate. About a quarter of those interviewed shared concerns about a demanding schedule of on-band and off-band events. These individuals said they felt pressure to attend as many events as possible, often at the cost of their academic progress. Some sample perspectives include:

- "The mentality of the band encouraged people to put band before anything else. So, you were driven to perform and not miss gigs. And have fun and support the section, to the point you want to miss classes. They indirectly put pressure on you to devote all your time to band. They keep records and take attendance. The member with the highest attendance is given an award. You are valued less if you skip gigs. You are almost shamed for doing that."
- "Picnic Day season of the first year, there were events every day. They said, 'You don't have to go every day.' But they pressured us to do so much. We put on rallies for people."

My grades were not good at all that quarter. Everyone was so obsessed with this event. Me and my friends were like, 'I hate it; I can't stand it.'"

- "You're damned if you miss practice or gigs. They say you don't need friends outside of band; these are friends and family. It is public shaming: 'Why are you coming around if you don't come to these things?' Everyone could viscerally feel like, 'Oh, I am underperforming for this organization.' I truly think they use those feelings to manipulate you into participating. Not showing up for the band is not showing up for family. It is a system-wide thing."

Traditions. Those interviewed all acknowledged the existence of traditions like Cabin, Barn, Midnight Rally, and Marching Test, which freshmen are invited to attend, sometimes on false pretenses. However, perceptions of these events differed. For example, many recalled Marching Test to be a harmless, if not positive, experience and enjoyed the surprises. As one student was assured, "There are no bad surprises in band." Similarly, many noted that section-only gatherings, called "bondings," were generally a "wholesome" and positive experience. However, nine of the 23 individuals interviewed shared the impression that some band traditions were harmful. Representative quotes include:

- "They told us for one of the parties we were going to Mexico. You're already sitting in the van when they say you don't have to wear the blindfold. [The destination was a Mexican restaurant.]"
- "Another example is the party called Barn. It's another deception to freshmen. Seniors tell freshmen they're going to do some activity far away. My section said we are going to paint cows with animal-friendly paint. It was weird when they blindfolded us because we are freshmen, and have to listen to seniors. We get there and they hand us a drink. Then it's a party with a band. Personally, I was hurt by that. I would not have gone if I knew it was just a large party. I had something else scheduled that night. There was no cell reception. I was trapped there. I had to apologize to my other friends. I decided to make the best of it. We were an hour and a half out. I felt if they were truthful with me, I would have driven, or not gone."
- "Then there was Picnic Day season. Spring quarter. Uppers, juniors and seniors. They do this thing for a fortnight. Drink every single night for 21 days straight. It's not a normal, healthy way to drink by anyone's standards."
- "I just remembered something about rock painting night. That same day, one of my friends was taken to another event. I only know because she told me. They told her and two other people that they were going to go to Sac State and paint their school mascot, but first they were going to go to someone's house to get paint. So, they taped [40-ounce containers of beer or malt liquor] to their hands while blindfolded. It was a race between her and two other people [selected for their varying ethnicities]. They called it the 'brown people' and the 'white people.' Apparently, [participants from the previous year] choose three freshmen every year to compete. She threw up immediately after drinking the first 40. I know her band grandpa [a mentor obtained through an informal CAMB lineage

process] was there. Apparently, she did not even remember that night. Her vomit was still on the fence.”

- “Traditions make people feel like they belong to this band. When you try to change something, you are offending people’s identity.”

C. Opportunities For Improvement

Those interviewed shared suggestions for improving the organization moving forward. Those include suggestions to eliminate the Coats/Yackets; Reduce Demands; Reduce Alumni Contact; Improve Training; Improve Leadership and Accountability; and, Suspend the Band.

Eliminate Coats/Yackets. Over a third of those we spoke with advocated to either eliminate or significantly diminish the role of the Coats/Yackets in the organization. Participants of all sections and levels of experience felt this solution would resolve a regular source of conflict for the organization, with little cost to morale. We heard:

- “I do not think Coats should be allowed. There is not a good way to restructure them to be a positive influence. I think they will hold on to the older tradition of ‘this is how we pass it down.’ They have their own lockers in the band room and the uniform room. It’s just really unnecessary. I don’t think they should be allowed, moving forward. I do not think the band can realistically improve the culture while they are an active force.”
- “I don’t think [the Coats] should be as influential. I don’t want to say we need to get rid of them, but the way they exist should be looked at or not exist at all. Just so they don’t have the kind of power, like they are a higher level than other people in band. I think the exclusivity would be hardest to stop. I don’t know how to fix them other than just to get rid of them. [...] So, the Coats. And a few other things that are passed down. Awards that are given. The difference is the coats... one is a [REDACTED]-sweater award. The person who got it wears the sweater, but has no influence with it. They wear it and people know about it, but it’s not a huge deal. It’s just an individual has it.”
- “I don’t think Coats should be a thing. It creates more hierarchy in the organization.”

Reduce Demands. A third of those interviewed thought it would be helpful to decrease the demands of the organization by participating in less performances, and minimizing the pressure on attendance for both on-band and off-band events. These individuals also felt some of the traditional unofficial requirements for freshmen, sophomores, section leaders, and officers should be decreased. For example:

- “I think [officer duties] are demanding to a ridiculous extent. We should have an open dialogue about our own positions. [...] I think officers can manage this individually.”
- “I think there should be a way to only participate in on-band-time activities. I think there is pressure to go to off-band stuff if you’re in band. Some people find a way to separate the music from the parties, but when I tried to do it, people treated me differently. I just want it to be a hobby, not my life. I have other things going on. [...] [One student] is a Coat and

die-hard band person. When I don't come to things, he says, 'You are not a true bandsman.' When I want to only do the things I think are fun, like play music. [...] [CAMB] needs to also respect students' time. If I march every football game, it's a huge commitment. It's a whole Friday and Saturday. [...]"

- "A big thing that's a big mentality in band is people are saying, 'Put school work first, before band.' At the same time, there's pressure to go to these things, especially around Picnic Day, to go to these practices, these performances. It is contradictory to me. I'd like people to stick to the message of your school and your health comes first. It's cool to go and really fun, but please take care of yourself."
- "Students also commit to too many things. The band performs three times a week. It's hard to keep up with grades. I tell them they are students first, not bandsmen. Sometimes they miss class to perform because they love it so much. They should focus on commencements and football games. Those are my recommendations."

Reduce Alumni Contact. A quarter of those interviewed suggested to significantly reduce alumni contact with the organization. They felt this solution would help to minimize the propagation of harmful traditions in the organization. Some asserted it would also help to protect students from sexual harassment and other inappropriate conduct by individuals who are outside the jurisdiction of University policies. Representative quotes include:

- "I do not know how to make the alumni situation better, to not have them be as much of an issue. But it is different since they are not under our jurisdiction. I think reform needs to be done with their involvement in University activities. I don't know if risk management [training] would be enough for them."
- "I think the alumni band should be disbanded. The alumni association should be disbanded. I don't think it is appropriate for ██████████ old men to still be involved in marching band."
- "I feel like the biggest issue is the massive alumni presence. They go to the parties and want everything to be back. When we wanted to change the lyrics to a song to not be about domestic abuse, the alumni were upset, like, 'Why are you so sensitive?' The band could be suspended for a couple months, but it won't diminish the alumni presence. If it was suspended for a year, the alumni could still come back because they know people."
- "Reduce contact with alumni. A lot of alum who come back do so for the wrong reasons, and tend to be reminiscent of how band used to be, which was misogynistic and toxic. Limiting alum participation. [...] Alum was suspended. Think it should stay that way until we get significant institutional changes, until we build a structure around how we handle student-alumni complaints. That doesn't exist."

Improve Training. A handful of those interviewed suggested to improve the risk management and related trainings, and to strengthen relations with campus resources. These individuals felt students would be more likely to adhere to policy and utilize University resources if they were more accessible or familiar. Those suggested included:

- “I think a quarterly risk management thing would also be helpful.”
- “Band needs to have a close relationship with campus resources. I know they used to work with CARE more. We do risk management training at the beginning of the year. It’s kind of taken as a joke. But we should be having serious training when it comes to that.”
- “I think the training should include more ‘taking space/making space.’ Not taking up so much space if you are a white male. When I was a section leader, no one gave me any space. They should not put people down because of their identities. The band is diverse. But often the white men in the band get more heard a lot of the time. [...]”
- “[The Joy of Marching] has a lot of good things outlined in there. Expectations for each member. Try to make Joy of Marching available. Tell everyone to keep a copy. The section for it on the website was broken. I feel like having all our policies and procedures more readily available might help things moving forward.”

Improve Leadership and Accountability. Close to half of those interviewed suggested improvements for leadership and accountability. They noted that having a stable staff director and coordinator would provide a reliable resource for questions, concerns, and oversight.

- “It would be nice to have career staff that stays. My freshman year, we would have one come when they were free. Then we had someone who got fired. Then Josh. If we want to improve our environment, we have to have career staff. It’s hard to balance if our career staff keeps changing. It is the only thing that grounds us and maintains our image. It will be a director and career staff. Honestly, that’s my biggest thing.”
- “There needs to be more explicit University oversight. I think it could happen in the way of officer positions moving to paid positions. Student Manager should be a staff position.”
- “A student-run organization sets up the band for hardship. Student leadership is good. Student-run is hard. Students don’t automatically trust other students to be leaders. Drum majors and sections leaders can change certain things, but also depends on teaching abilities. But we have students run rehearsals here. They are not trained educators.”
- “I think there should be a lot more University oversight. I think the student-run thing is not working well, to not have accountability to a University person.”
- “I think right now the band needs a whole overhaul. Hire new staff. Limit the student-run government. I don’t want to take away power from students, but they haven’t wielded it responsibly. Having the Director involved in more day-to-day things. Have a Director who will create strict guidelines for who can be an officer. And a clear process for removing an officer who is not their doing duty. Someone could be on their 30th strike and they are never getting removed. [...] I think we should have twice-a-month meetings where we sit down as a band. No playing. Just talk about what is going on in the band culture. See what changes we need to make. See how people are feeling. We need to set aside time to talk. A lot of people feel silenced. I think if we created time to bring up these issues in an educated and human way, it might alleviate some problems.”

