Q&A on Cal Q&A!

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What is Cal Queer & Asian (Cal Q&A)?

We are a club at UC Berkeley dedicated to exploring the intersectionality of queer and Asian identities and providing a community, safe space, social group, and support network for queer & Asian students.

Club History

The club was first founded in 1995, under the name "Gay & Asian," and then later renamed "CAL B GAY (Cal Asian Lesbian, Bisexual & Gay Alliances Younited)." Attendance at the meetings hovered around 30 people, consisting mostly of gay cisgender men. In addition to regular meetings, CAL B GAY organized many social events, including collaborations with other groups like Trikone and Stanford Q&A, as well as more informal gatherings such as trips to gay bars in the Castro. CAL B GAY grew to become one of the most visible queer organizations at UC Berkeley.

In the 2000–2001 academic year, following the departure of most of CAL B GAY's core members, CAL B GAY was renamed "Cal Queer & Asian," as it is known today. CAL B GAY was one of the major forces behind the Queer Asian & Pacific Islander Conference in the 90s. This conference attracted attendees not only from California but also from the East Coast, Canada, and even Great Britain. Despite being planned as an annual conference, however, it had only one run and was revived in 2008 with the Queer & Asian Conference (QACON). Cal QACON continued to be held annually by Cal Q&A until 2019, after which the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted club numbers and attendance. We are hoping to bring QACON back in Spring 2025!

What do you do?

General Meetings: Occur every other week from 6:30–8:00pm in QARC (Queer Alliance Resource Center in Hearst Field Annex A15), sometimes

featuring educational or discussion-based meetings on more serious Queer/Asian related topics, or social events such as storytime, crafts, or movie nights.

Socials: Occur usually on Saturdays following General Meetings. Previous socials we've done include picnics, museum visits, hikes, karaoke, potluck, board games, and more!

Study & Play with Cal Q&A (SPQA): Occurs every week that we don't have General Meetings, at the same time and place (6:30-8:00pm in QARC). These are unstructured meetings where we hang out, work on homework/study together, or play board games.

Other events: Some special events we host include a community bonding retreat (hopefully) every semester or every year where we go somewhere fun and build community. We also host Spring and Fall Banquets to celebrate the end of the semester featuring dinner and games during Dead Week.

What if I'm not queer, or not sure if I am?

We welcome anyone — queer, questioning, ally — who has genuine interest and respect for our community values to join!

What if I'm not Asian, or not sure if I am?

We recognize that "Asia" is not a clearly defined area or cultural identity, and we invite anyone who self-identifies or aligns themselves with an "Asian" identity, however, you personally define that. We also welcome anyone who isn't Asian but has genuine interest and respect for our community values to join!

Can I join if I'm a grad student/exchange student/staff/not a student?

Yes! We're welcome to anyone interested in getting involved in the club if it supports you, though we are primarily geared toward Cal students (including grad, transfer, international, and exchange students).

What are your community values/guidelines?

We are a community comprised of peoples from a variety of different backgrounds. As such we uphold the following community values/guidelines to ensure that we have an inclusive, diverse, and accessible space.

Respect and confidentiality: For many of our members this could be the first time that something about their past or present is revealed in a social setting, or sensitive stories and experiences can arise, and we strive to make sure that our members feel comfortable and safe.

Take space, make space: We encourage everyone to be able to take space and share their own thoughts and experiences but also make space and ensure that all voices can be heard, keeping in mind that our space is dedicated to queer & Asian voices and perspectives.

Don't yuck on my yum: Recognize and respect personal differences. Even if your views are contrary to others', be conscious of your own reactions (as well as internalized societal norms like misogyny, transphobia, xenophobia, etc.) and don't judge or criticize people for their personal tastes and preferences.

Trust intent, recognize impact: Recognize and trust that group members don't intend to harm or offend, but also understand the importance of impact, that your words and behaviors can impact others—name impact by respectfully informing someone/the group that something hurts you and explain why.

Speak from the "I" and Avoid Making Generalizations: Avoid making blanket statements about any groups of people. Speak from your own experiences and opinions (e.g. instead of saying, "All people think that....", rephrase it to say, "From my own observations, I notice that a lot of people tend to think that..."). Similarly, do not assume anyone's identity, sexual orientation, gender, etc.

Solidarity & Intersectionality: We are a group dedicated to intersectionality, a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe a "lens, a prism, for seeing how various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other." As such, we recognize that our struggle is not unrelated to the struggles of other BIPOC, class conflict, disability rights, and other movements. We recognize that we operate on stolen Ohlone land and that we benefit from the use and occupation of this land.

Great! How do I join?

We are a casual club with no defined membership, so feel free to drop by any of our meetings anytime, even if you missed previous meetings! We encourage you to bring your friends as well! We understand that everyone is busy, so no judgment if you can only make one or two meetings a semester; we're always excited to see new faces!

You can join our official mailing list and let us know your accommodation needs using this form. Keep up with us by following our Instagram and joining our Discord, which is the number one place for announcements and resources

How can I get EVEN MORE involved?

We welcome you to join our Cal Q&A Board! We are always open to new applications, and joining the board is a great way to get more involved in the club, form friendships, get leadership experience, and make your ideas heard.

If you can't join Board but still want to be involved, consider joining our QACON Committee!

I need resources or advice!

Check out our resource & media library which has info for on-campus resources! Or post any questions to the #💖safe-space channel on our Discord, message any board members via Discord, or email calqanda@gmail.com.