



Dear 5C Ski Community,

Our club is in jeopardy. Please take the time to read our email to learn about recent events and how you can help.

TL; DR;

Ski Bus

Overnight, Pomona admin wrote a new school policy to punish the Ski Club for having and operating the bus.

Alcohol

The Club has been under investigation for alcohol consumption on club trips. We'd like to make it abundantly clear that the Club has never used school funding or fundraised proceeds to purchase alcohol.

Finances

Pomona admin has frozen our club money preventing us from funding the Beginner Daze accessibility and recreational programs you know and love.

Petition

If the Club has offered a positive impact to your college experience, show your support by signing [a petition of support](#).

As many of you may already know, we have been experiencing difficulties with administration. While we are a 5C organization, the administration at Pomona College oversees all 5C club activities. **Currently, the Pomona Administration has suspended the Ski & Snowboard Club until Spring of 2024.** As of now, we are prohibited from running the events we all love: Reading Daze, Beginner Daze, Summer Daze, Weekend Trips, movie screenings, and our Ikon discount program. The sections below will detail why these actions were unjustified and disrespectful to the leadership and this community the club serves.

Bus:

Last year, several of our club leaders fundraised for, and were sponsored by, Ikon to purchase a used school bus in an effort to increase accessibility, encourage community bonding, and reduce emissions. The administration was made aware of that purchase and its operation. Without open discussion or debate, they deemed the project unfit for our community and wrote a new school policy overnight to make our actions punishable.

Alcohol:

Frustrations with the bus sparked investigations into all other areas of club activity and expenditure, including activities such as Reading Daze, Beginner Daze, and general club events. These investigations were conducted in search of evidence of alcohol consumption and purchases and the misuse of institutional funding.

First, to be very clear, we have never used Senate funding to purchase alcohol, nor do we make alcohol a central or essential aspect of our events. Almost all of our events are substance free (Beginner Daze, movie screenings, etc.) and we always have designated club staff at events where alcohol is present that work to do their best to make sure that the events remain safe and respectful. Moreover, the hypocrisy of the administration is on full display here. We are not dry campuses and these colleges do not enforce strict alcohol policy on campus. In fact, you can request reimbursement from an alcohol fund for student organized events on campus. Moreover, it is important to mention that there has never been an alcohol related medical transport directly involving or associated with one of our club events. Yet this is a common occurrence at school sponsored and monitored events. Nevertheless, they have

selectively decided that if the club facilitates an environment where alcohol is present that this is a gross misconduct of school policy and deserves severe punishment. Finally, we want to make it abundantly clear that **no alcohol has ever been purchased using our institutionally allocated funding or our fundraised proceeds.**

Finances:

At the beginning of the year, the club received a \$6,400 amount from the 5C student senates (PO: \$3,000, HMC: \$600, CMC: \$700, SCR: \$600, PZ \$1,500)— for 753 actively registered club members which comes down to \$8.50 per person. The rest of our budget was fundraised through our partnership with Ikon. While the recreational events such as Reading Daze are funded by those who attend it, **accessibility events like Beginner Daze are where the club spends the majority of its money.** The club uses a “pay-what-you-can” model for Beginner Daze—and this subsidization costs the club over \$8,000 for each one of the three Beginner Daze we plan each year.

Administration has taken issue with the fact that the club had been operating a Venmo account which was being managed by club leadership rather than the institution. They claim there is no accountability for how the funds are managed or spent, yet our internal system works in a similar way to how the ASPC account works. Every member of the executive board was always welcome to check on fund balances and transactions. It is also important to note there has never been an allegation from any student, member or leader of the club about a concern with respect to missing or misused funds. Any accounting mistakes that were made, e.g a Reading Daze participant paid for passes but was missed on the order form were always rectified.

With regards to the information recently shared with the Harvey Mudd community, there is miscommunication about to whom/for what that funding is for and moreover unsubstantiated allegations about how that funding was spent. This funding was for the competitive team that is a separate organization which files for budget requests independently for all athletic expenses. The \$10,000 allocated to the team was for a combination of regular season expenses, registering and supporting a 30 member team, and sending 17 qualified athletes to national championships. To put this into context, this is a relatively small allocation for an athletic team of this size and the expenses a sport like this accrues. There are numerous club teams budgets which are equal to or greater than this amount. It was communicated by ASHMC officials that there were “issues & discrepancies that came to light...statements made by club representatives which were not corroborated...we have blocked future funding for the upcoming year”. This message is misleading and confusing as there was no evidence provided to substantiate any of these claims either by Pomona administration or by the Senate to team leaders. Moreover, team leaders reached out when they were first made aware of these allegations last Friday 03/24 in an attempt to rectify any issues

or misunderstandings. Unfortunately their response stated “we have already set this policy into place” and didn’t give the team leader any opportunity to hear what the accusations were or defend the organization.

We currently have \$15,000 frozen in our ASPC account which is a combination of Senate funding and self-fundraiser proceeds, all of which was slated to be spent on our accessibility initiative [Beginner Daze](#). Our total budget for our beginner accessibility initiatives was roughly \$24,000 for this year, and this was expected to cover roughly 100 students’ access to the mountains. To put this into perspective, this is in line with the roughly \$25k for roughly 100 students that the ASPC spends on Ski-Beach day. The big difference is that we provide a full day of skiing & lessons to members which makes our on-mountain experience more expensive while they are able to offer the beach segment too. The club was able to run its first of three planned beginner day trips this season. In light of the suspension, and because of how impactful and important this initiative is to us, we offered a solution to the administration to allow a partial lift of the suspension in order for us to run Beginner Daze with college staff supervision present. They rejected this solution without a rebuttal offer or any logic to substantiate their decision. **At the end of the day, this suspension primarily punishes motivated and disadvantaged students who have always wanted to experience winter sports.** This is a part of the hundreds of students who rely on our gear closet, Beginner Daze programming, experience & advice, and our steep discounts on gear and season passes to make these activities more accessible to them.

Petition:

Ski Club leaders have invested thousands of volunteer hours into building systems to support large-scale accessibility programming that is frequently advertised through official school social media and PR channels as an extraordinary and unique selling point of the Claremont Colleges.

Now we are asking for your help. We need your support in demonstrating to the administration that the club is a vibrant and impactful organization on campus that has had a positive influence on your lives by [signing this short petition](#). The petition states that the student body has benefited from their involvement in the club, and that the club provides important and meaningful recreational programming for students.

Finally if you have the time and energy please send a quick email to [Dean Ellie Ash-Bala \(ellie.ash-bala@pomona.edu\)](mailto:ellie.ash-bala@pomona.edu) and/or [Dean Josh Eisenberg \(josh.eisenberg@pomona.edu\)](mailto:josh.eisenberg@pomona.edu), with a note about how this club has positively impacted your life while being a student at the Claremont Colleges and if it has genuinely been a resource and community which has made winter sports more accessible for you while on campus. It has been made clear to us that they do not believe that our club operating is vital to or particularly important to student’s campus life and that students

who wish to ski or snowboard while on campus will continue to do so. Please CC us (contact@5cski.org) if you do send a note so that we can compile them and make sure your message doesn't land on deaf ears.

We want to emphasize that we remain committed to our values of **fostering inclusivity and accessibility within the outdoors community** that underpin our club. We believe that the Ski and Snowboard Club can serve as a source of connection and community for all members, and we are determined to continue providing opportunities for members to come together, have fun, and enjoy the outdoors.

Sincerely,
The 5C Ski Leadership Team

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