

## ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL FOR THE STUDENT UNION

### Problem

1. There is a crying need for extra space. The present Student Union is overcrowded.
2. It is essential to move the student government offices to the ground floor, where they are easily accessible to other students.
3. There are additional spatial needs for a child care facility to serve the entire campus, as well as handicraft, exhibit, lounge and recreation facilities.

These problems have generated the existing proposal which seeks to add 26,000 square feet to Erb.

However, there are also three other problems to solve:

4. It is essential for the students at a university to feel that they "belong" everywhere. The presence of a monolithic single student union building, creates the strong feeling that it is the only legitimate student territory in the academic part of campus, and that every other area actually belongs to staff and faculty. Student territory must be distributed all over campus to meet this need.
5. Undergraduates, graduate students and faculty need coffee, food, recreation near their places of work. The present site is 10 minutes away from many parts of campus. People need places to go to which are just a couple of minutes from their departments.

6. It is likely that the day of centralized student unions is tied in to a high-school collegiate view of campus life, which is disappearing as students become more mature, more adult, and less like schoolboys. The effects of this change are so strong that at UC Berkeley, for example, attendance at the central union has dropped off drastically in the last seven years. Students are now starting to prefer gathering in small groups, around the communities they can understand at a human level; they have started to reject the abstract and impersonal community of the huge megalithic unions. At Berkeley, this has had drastic economic consequences. Since 1966 the Central Union has experienced a disastrous 40% decline in the number of customers, while decentralized facilities have maintained a steady customer count over the same period. As a result, the central eating facilities are now operating in a state of financial crisis, while the three small decentralized cafes are financially solvent, and account for 23% of all customers.



Proposal

If we try to solve all six of these problems simultaneously, and not just the first two, we are led to the following general kind of solution: Spend part of the money to expand Erb - to make the student offices more accessible, and to add space for child care, craft work and lounge; and spend part of the money creating satellite unions, at various points on campus, in the areas which contain the greatest concentrations of students.

To illustrate this approach to the problem we have sketched out one possible solution, which spends the money as follows:

\$1,800,000 ... To expand and rennovate Erb Memorial Student Union, to contain space for child care, offices, crafts and student assembly: 13,200 square feet of space.

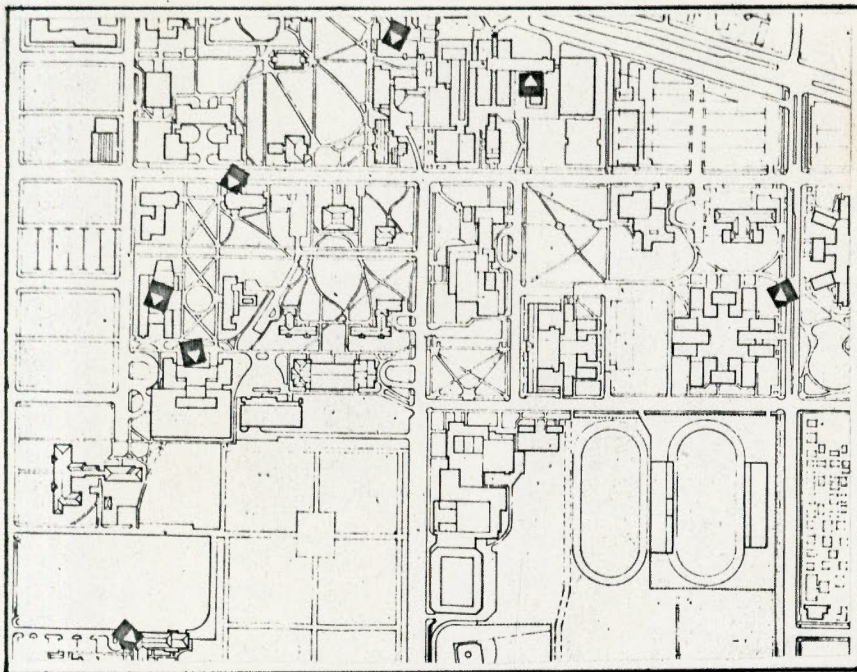
\$1,800,000 ... To create five small satellite unions at approximately 5,000 square feet of space each, with possible location and organization as follows:

1. In Prince Lucian Campbell Hall: Cafe, lounge, food service.
2. Near the Music and Education buildings: Cafe, lounge, food service, sports.
3. Near the dorms, on Agate Street: Student store, cabaret, library-lounge.

4. In the old Coop Store in Chapman Hall: Store, food service, craft room.
5. In the Science Complex: Lounge, food service, cafe.

These spaces cover exactly the same program needs as the existing proposal, and will therefore reduce overcrowding equally well, and will cost the same: \$3,600,000. But this approach solves all six problems, not just two. We do not suggest that exactly this solution be adopted. It might be better to have six satellites, or four - and the locations for the satellites need further study. But we are convinced that some proposal of this kind is essential for the overall health of the university community. We believe that these arguments are firmly rooted in common sense, and in people's common experiences. If 75% of the student body prefers this approach, as we believe, then it would be essential for the university to reconsider its present approach, and to reallocate the money in the manner we have outlined.



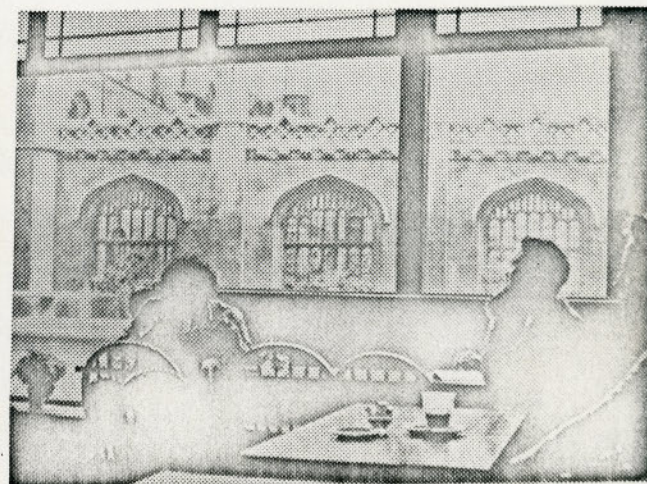
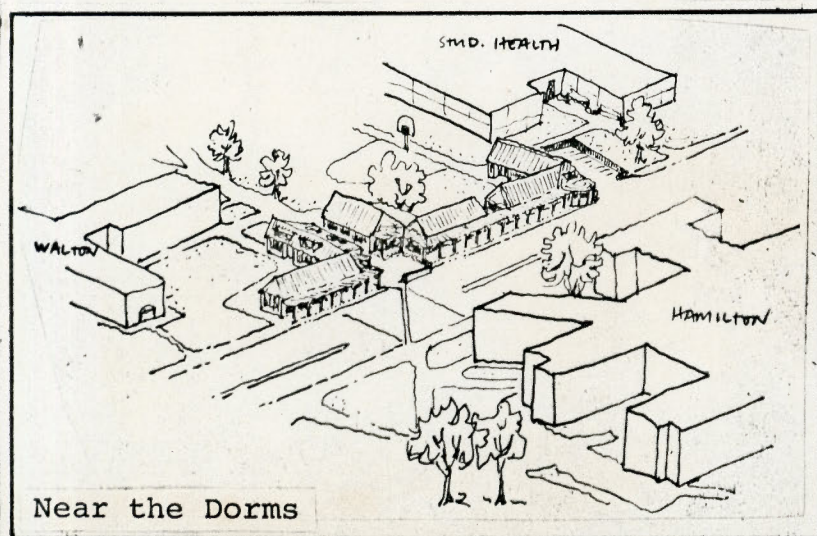
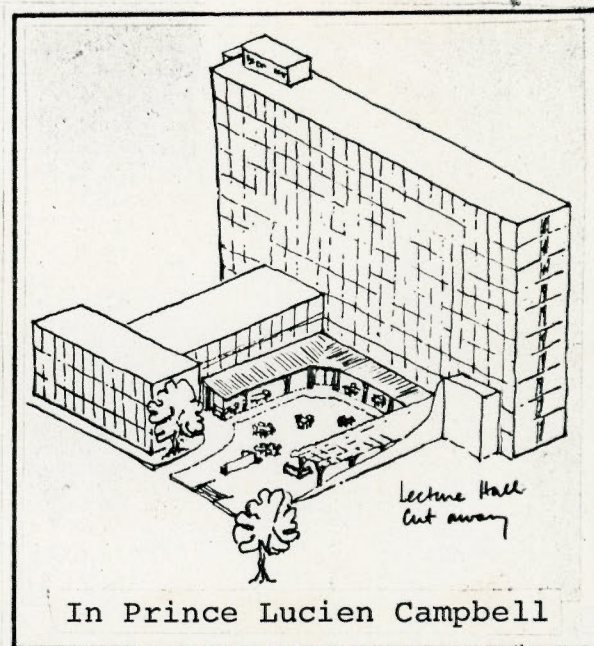
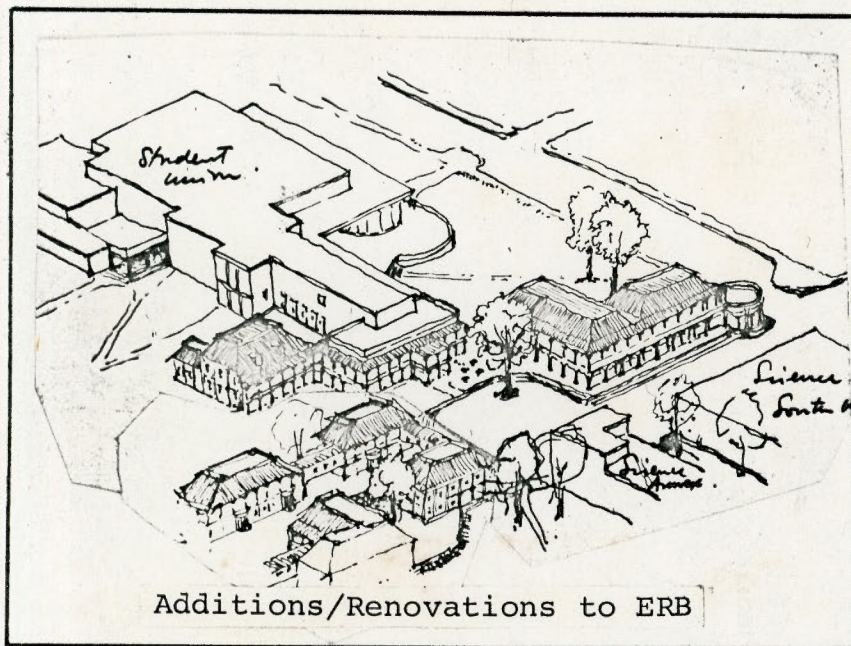


## ILLUSTRATIONS

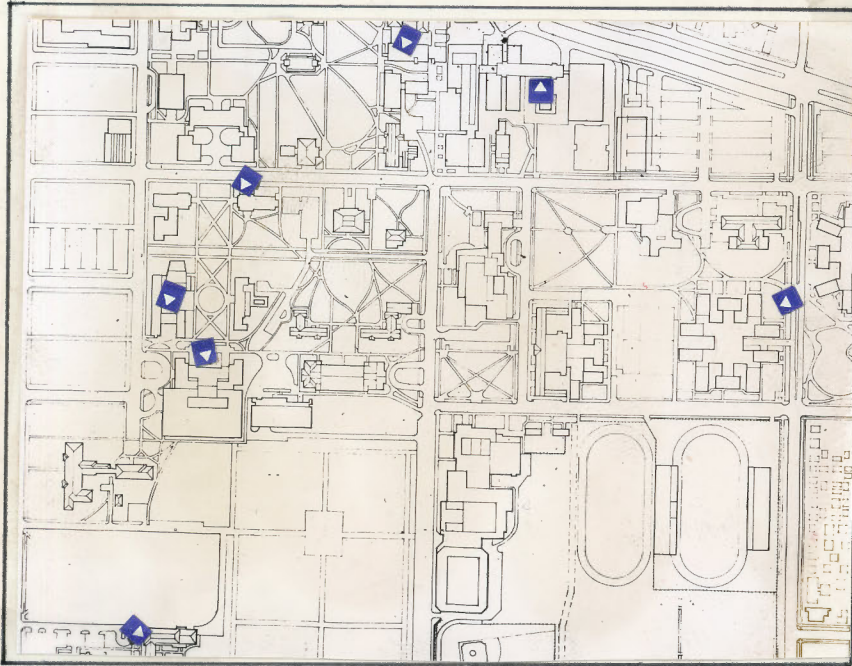


Map of campus

Seven possible locations  
for small student unions.





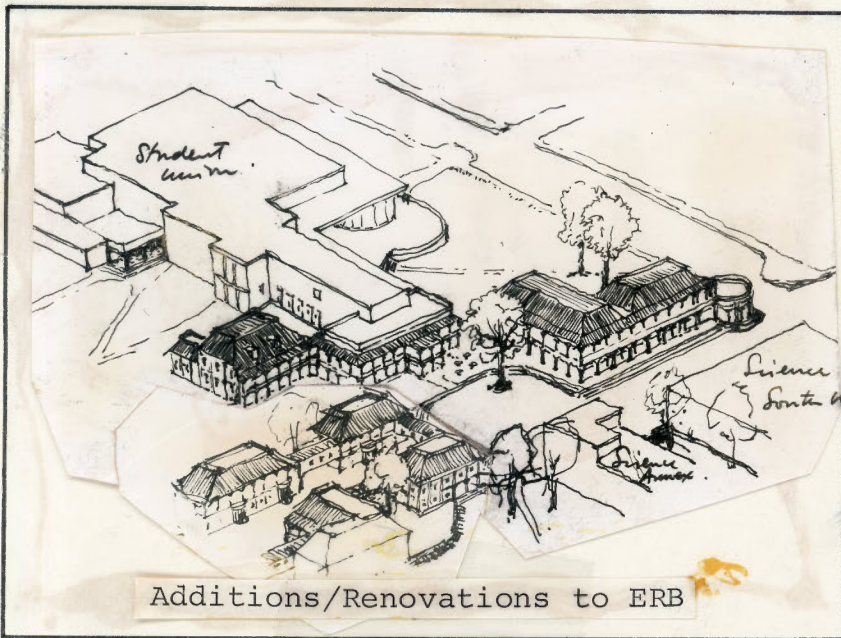


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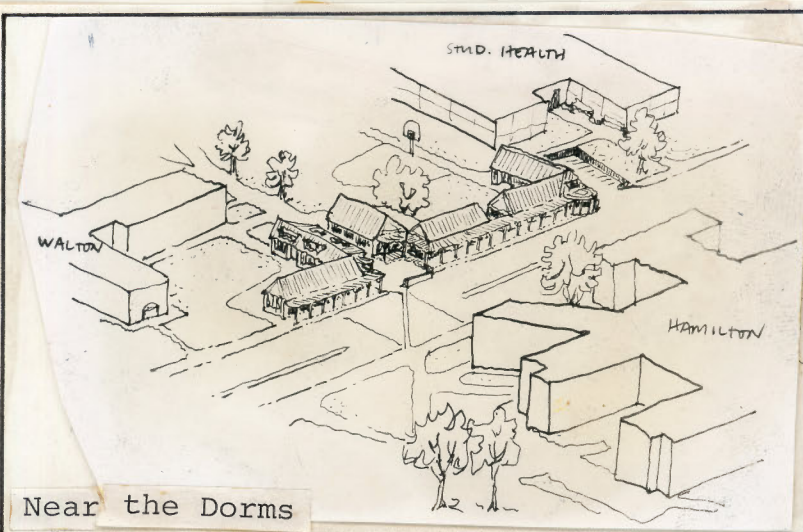
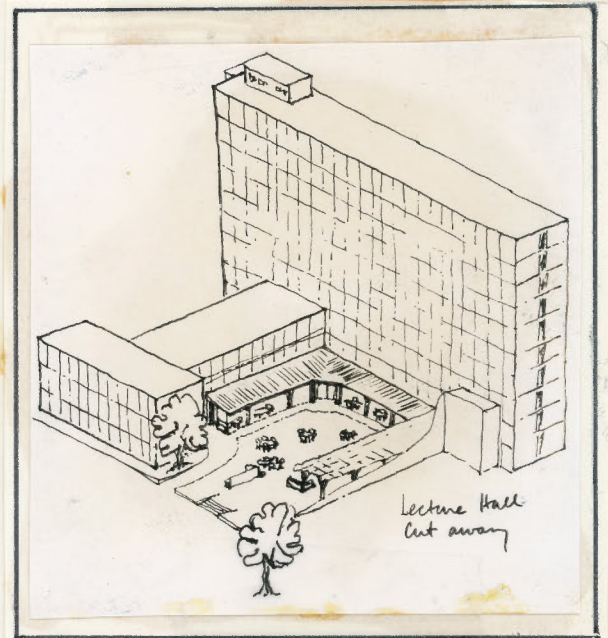


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Additions/Renovations to ERB



Near the Dorms



Small cafe close to work & class.