

## The Original Authority on Questioning Authority

### ***What do we mean by Questioning Authority?***

Questioning authority means challenging assumptions and rejecting complacency. It's not about rebellion or change for the sake of novelty but about examining traditional paradigms through a new lens, about thinking differently, creatively and with vigor. It is at the heart of the scientific method. It's about asking the right questions and seeking answers in unexpected places. To question authority means ignoring boundaries, taking nothing for granted and ultimately being a leader in innovation.

Questioning authority is not a new concept but one that underpins the discoveries of generations of trailblazers and independent thinkers:

*I would rather die having spoken in my manner, than speak in your manner and live.* – Socrates

*It is the first right of every citizen to question authority.* — Benjamin Franklin

*Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning.*  
– Albert Einstein

*Every great advance in natural knowledge has involved the absolute rejection of authority.*  
– Thomas Henry Huxley

*My parents are both college professors, and it made me want to question authority, standards and traditions.*  
– Maya Lin

*Think for yourself and question authority.* – Timothy Leary

*The ivory-tower atmosphere and relative isolation of UCSC were in a way liberating; there were not a lot of "experts" around to discourage you from going in unusual directions.* – Harry Noller

*Part of the culture at Santa Cruz is the ability to look at things in completely new ways.* – Sandra Faber

### ***Why are we the Original?***

UC Santa Cruz was founded during the turbulence of the 1960s. At other universities, students revolted against social norms but often staked positions that were at odds with faculty and administrators. At Santa Cruz, students, faculty and administrators often worked together to question authority and challenge the prevailing assumptions of the day.

The campus itself was formed using an unconventional model. Rather than organizing itself around the prevailing German model of research universities, it established a series of liberal arts colleges that would foster student engagement. And it rejected the concept of grades in favor of qualitative evaluations. In addition to traditional majors, students studied subjects such as the "History of Consciousness."

While the university has evolved over the years, the ethos of looking at the world a little differently still thrives at Santa Cruz. That's why we are the birthplace of organic farming, the site where scientists assembled the first working draft of the human genome sequence, and the home of the Grateful Dead Archives. Deep in the redwood forest, three campus cosmologists developed the theory of Cold Dark Matter, numerous Pulitzer Prize winning authors were inspired and the Banana Slug became the world's most unusual mascot. We embrace the meaning and spirit of disruptive technology. We have taught it since we opened our doors.

There's no question that UC Santa Cruz is the original authority on questioning authority!