**Tri-Cooperative Housing Application**

**Name: Cristóbal Bächler Date: 3 – 21 - 2017**

**Your gender pronouns: He**

**(she/her, they/them, etc.)**

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The Tri-Cooperatives (or Tri-Coops) are an on-campus student housing association providing affordable, cooperative housing to low-income students as well as students seeking housing that fosters educational and personal growth as instrumental components of safe and comfortable living. The community is comprised of three houses: Davis Student Co-op (DSC), Pierce, and Agrarian Effort (Ag), which regularly house 12-14 students during the ‘academic year’. The houses operate by consensus and collective action as independent entities as well as a community. Together, we stand by 4 **community agreements**:

1. At the Tricoops we are actively working to create a space where we feel physically and emotionally comfortable, respected and safe from oppressive forces.

2. This is a learning space: we are working together to unlearn oppressive behaviors, we embrace some level of discomfort in this process but are creating a space for everyone to take initiative to learn.

3. We strive to improve our community and uphold the community agreements in the form of conversations, workshops or community projects.

4. These community agreements are yours; re-agree upon them at the first Tri-coop meeting of the year. Change and modify them as needed via the consensus process.

All this being said, the experience of living at the Tri-Cooperatives changes with each generation, it shifts with each new quarter. Our community agreements are subject to change, but the basis of our community relies on acceptance rather than tolerance, as well as continuous communication and interest in living *cooperatively*. The expectations of communication and acceptance are meant to help us in unlearning our oppressive behaviors and community-building. While reading this application try to envision your role in a cooperative community. Think about what you look forward to sharing rather than what you think the community is looking for specifically.

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**Earliest move-in date/how flexible is this date?**

September 5th. But, it could be pretty flexible as I could plan arriving between September 1st and the 9th.

**If applicable, how soon do you need a response from us?**

Hopefully, the first days of August.

**Approximate timeframe for which you need housing:**9/5/2017 to 3/30/2018

**What is your area of study? Class standing (i.e. freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, super senior, graduate student)**

I’m a forth-year (senior) student of Business and Economics at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, and I’m going to UC Davis through a study broad programme for two trimesters: Fall 2017 and Winter 2018.

**The tri-cooperatives were founded to provide affordable housing for students. Do you consider yourself low-income? If you feel comfortable, use this space to describe your current financial situation.**

I do not consider myself low-income In Chili, but I cannot entirely afford an exchange program either. As a Chilean student, it is very difficult to work and study at the same time, because there are no well-paid part-time jobs. Also, in Chile it is very common to live with your parents; in my case I live with them, so I still economically depend on them. Although this exchange program is an incredible opportunity, it means that I will need to leave my work and I won’t be living under my parents’ roof, which, of course, will bring me many expenses like housing, food and others that I’m not used to afford. For this, the tri-cooperative houses offer me an affordable housing option, since my main economic income when I arrive at UC-Davis will be my personal savings from the past three years.

**Can you come over for an interview/dinner? When?**

Since I live in Chile, it is impossible for me to travel in order to have an interview or dinner with you. I would have loved to do so; still, I’m more than interested in knowing more about the community in these cooperative houses, and if it is possible we could arrange an interview through Skype. Another alternative is contacting me through e-mail (cris.bachler@uc.cl) or writing me on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/cristobal.bachlersilva>). Any of the two works for me, and I’m more than happy to have an opportunity of knowing more about what you do, and that you could know me a bit more as well.

**Accessibilityneeds**

None =)

**A bit about myself:**  
My name is Cristóbal Bächler and I’m Chilean. Currently, I’m forth-year student of Business and Economics at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. This is my second degree, because I previously studied Film Studies at Universidad de Chile. I’ve lived my entire life in Chile, and now through a study broad programme I’m going to UC-Davis for two trimesters: from Fall 2017 to Winter 2018. I’ve worked as a waiter and now I’m a teaching assistant at my Faculty. I’ve also had experience in two volunteering projects. One is called “Jóvenes sin Fronteras” (translated as Youths without Boarders) in which we participate in different workshops that aim at building new houses in the South of Chile. The other project is called “Comisión de Acogida UC [CAUC]”; this focuses on welcoming the exchange students that come to PUC through 6-months or one-year study abroad programmes. Through the different activities that we organize, we try making their stay more comfortable, this is achieved by showing them the Chilean culture and introducing them to students who not only come from Chile but also from the rest of the world. I really want to stay in one of the Tri-Cooperative Houses, because I firmly believe that a study broad programme is an excellent opportunity for opening your mind to other realities, for contributing with your own experience, but more importantly, for growing up as a person. I have a lot of experience in relating myself with people from different parts of the world, and that’s the main reason why I think this is a perfect place for sharing with others, learning from them and getting the most of this exchange experience.

**1.) What communities do you view yourself being a part of? (i.e. different racial, ethnic, and gender identities, sexualities, faiths, accessibility needs, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and political alignments) What is your experience with diverse groups of people? AND how do you see yourself contributing to a diverse community?**

At my University, I participate in a volunteering programme called “Comisión de Acogida UC”, which focuses on organizing different activities for the exchange students who are coming to PUC through 6-months or one-year programmes. What we aim through this project is that the exchange students, who come from all over the world, feel comfortable during their stay in Chile and that they easily immerse in the culture. This is achieved through the different activities that we organized, but also by guiding and supporting them with daily problems that they face during the first months of their stay.

It fascinates me to bind with other people, listen to their stories and learning other ways of facing life, as I’m convinced that respect and love are necessary when relating yourself with a person that might come from a completely different reality than yours. I truly feel this enriches your vision of the world and it contributes to your personal growth. Among the communities that I’ve participated, mostly because I feel they kind of relate to my personality, are those that focus on cultural integration, cultural diversity, educational volunteering, Buddhist Studies, Literature and others.

**2.) We try our best to make our homes a safe place for the people in this community. What does a comfortable space mean for you personally? OR what is your ideal living situation?**

I would define a comfortable space as one that finds its basis on knowledge of and respect towards other people. One that could be thought of as a community space that goes from listening to music and talking about daily problems, to one where you could openly discuss world problems without feeling you have to hide what you think or believe. A space that allows you to make mistakes but learn from them too, and more importantly, one that allows you to honestly show yourself without any possible restriction. I also believe that the sense of community not only goes from always having someone to talk to, but also respecting if someone wants to set aside and enjoy their own private time. That’s to say, a space where privacy and community moments find a balance; yet, a constant invitation to share and know more about each other is preserved.

**3.) Can you think of a time when something happened that you felt was wrong and you wanted to change it?  What did you do or wanted to do to change it? OR What sort of injustices do you feel most strongly against in the world?**

As I live in Latin America, I’ve always faced or known about many injustices that make me feel angry; for example, discrimination, misogyny, power abuse and others. But, I have to say that the one that infuriates me the most is the lack of economic resources. I cannot stand that there are so many people that because of their low background cannot have access to healthcare or education, or even that many elders have nothing to eat or have to sleep on the streets without any shelter. For this reason, I support the so-called punk attitude and I strongly believe in the “do it yourself”, as I try fighting against these injustices from any contribution you can make. As I previously mentioned, I participate in the volunteering programme “Jóvenes sin Fronteras” (Youths without Boarders) in which each summer I take part in different activities and workshops directed to young people living in Southern Chile. I could also say that I apply this way of thinking to my experience as a teaching assistant, because I always try helping students with the difficulties they face in their courses, by being proactive and helpful when delivering the assistantships and answering to their questions. Similarly, my participation in the volunteering project for the exchange students have showed me how I could help in their adaptation to a new country, and making their experience worth living. These are little contributions that I make with the possibility of improving this society a bit more every day.

**4.) By nature of living in a coop you are actively involved in resistance in many different areas (i.e. capitalism, patriarchy, racism, racist food systems, heteronormativity, sexism, transphobia, colonialism, fatphobia, negative body-image, gender stereotypes, etc.). In what aspects of your life do you find yourself actively resisting unjust forces?**

Once I went to a play in which one of the characters said, “Fight against McDonalds by being a vegetarian. Destroy the petrol hegemony through cycling. Boycott capitalism by stopping purchasing unnecessary goods. With only one generation that stops having children, the salaries and the working conditions will immediately improve.” From that moment on, I decided these would be the same principles I would follow. I believe that the fight against the injustices previously described could be done through what I call “micro-politics”; that is to say, to be kind and respectful towards others is the most revolutionary act you could do in this individualist and competitive world. For this, I became a vegetarian, I ride my bicycle and I buy clothes when it is only strictly necessary. I also read many books, but more importantly, I try treating people as sensitive human beings. In this sense, I don’t judge anyone because I don’t believe that if someone eats meat or drives a car, or even is a consumerist he/she would be a bad person. Instead, I believe he/she lives his/her life in way that is different from mine (not better nor worse, but different). I try to be kind to everyone who surrounds me, because I understand that they might be fighting a battle that I might know nothing of.

**5.) There are weekly/monthly/quarterly commitments residents have to the house and community. Some of these commitments are chores, meetings, work parties (once a quarter deep cleaning of the house). Do you think that you could balance these in your schedule?**

I’m convinced I would be able to find a balance between these activities and my schedule. Through these activities I’m sure that I will be fulfilling part of the purpose I consider this exchange experience has, one that involves learning, growing and becoming a better person.

I think that all these activities will help us leaning, specially considering the context of an exchange student. I don’t consider that I will go abroad only for sitting on a chair and read a book, but instead to be able to meet new people, share with them and work hand-in-hand while learning about their cultures, religion and ways of thinking. That’s what interests me the most and what I’m looking forward to experiencing in this cooperative house. I don’t pretend to be in my room only reading and studying, but to contribute in any activity or house chore in which my help may be required. In fact, as I previously said, I worked as a waiter for three year, so I’m used to washing the dishes and cleaning the bathrooms. Although I always carried out these activities on my own, I find incredible that you can simply transform a daily chore into a moment for meeting and sharing with other people.

**6.) Tell us about someone who is a positive/inspirational presence in your life or talk about one of your heroes:**

My biggest hero is Mahatma Gandhi, because he has made me realized that you could see the world through humble and loving eyes, leaving aside the arrogance and the so-called moral supremacy that make this world worse. Therefore, I think the best way of fighting against injustice and hate is through pacifisms. I truly support the concept of “civil disobedience”, because it shows that hate and violence only lead to more of the same, and the only way of truly stopping these from spreading is through supporting non-violence. What is more, the Chilean singer and songwriter Violeta Parra says “Who is bad only love makes him pure and sincere” and I truly believe in these words as they reflect love’s transforming power.

**7.) We live in a community based off consensus, which requires compromise: tell us about a time you have had to compromise. OR Tell us about a conflict you experienced that felt unresolved.**

I’ve compromised myself with many things, and in fact, I am a person that always keeps his promises. I think it is necessary to understand the other, and when you are truly able to do so you finally realize that’s not that difficult to keep the promises made. Throughout my experience as a volunteer, waiter and teaching assistant, I have come to realize that you are a sort of engine of a big machine, and if you fail the entire system fails too. This is the main reason that when I compromise with someone I do my best to keep that promise, so not to disappoint those who have trusted in me and respect me. To be honest, I don’t remember any moment in which I have not kept my promises, as I try being the most sincere and trustworthy person I could be. Therefore, I always try telling the truth and if I see myself incapable of fulfilling an activity or compromise, I always try to inform the person so he/she doesn’t feel let down and, what’s more, the problem is not left unsolved.

**Disclaimer: For the following question, if you lack experience or knowledge in any of these fields, this will not be held against you in this application. People enter this space with varying levels of experience and knowledge, and every person is given an opportunity to learn, change, and alter their perspective, and to contribute to this community in whatever way they can. This question is an opportunity to discuss your interests/experiences and how they fit into this community.**

**8.) Do you have any previous knowledge pertaining to financially, mechanically, or socially maintaining a household? What aspects of our community are you interested in being involved with or learning about? Circle your interests and if you feel comfortable, explain below.**

**Excel Spreadsheets (yes) Balance Budgets (yes) Food Shopping**

**Sound Systems  (yes)                  Carpentry (yes)                       Plumbing (yes)**

**Gardening Skills or Knowledge          Cleaning (yes)                Bee Keeping (yes)**

**Leadership Skills                        Committee/Meeting Skills   (yes)   Emotional Support (yes)**

**Pet Care (yes) Other!**

As I live only with my mother in Chile, I’m in charge of fixing the housing problems that constantly occur, like fixing the doors’ hinges or the bathroom pipes. This shows that I have experienced in house chores and the domestic context. On the one hand, my degree has taught me to manage very well an Excel sheet and any kind of budget planned; on the other hand, I also have a basic knowledge of carpentry because of my experience with the houses at Youths without Boarders. Additionally, my degree in Film Studies taught me the importance of the interpersonal relationships and the emotional support, so I consider myself a person capable of giving a good advice if someone requires it. On another aspect, I’m a vegetarian, which means that I have compromised myself with animal rights, not also adding that I have two cats of which I am responsible.

Regardless of my lack of experience in the topics described, I am more than open to learn about Bee Keeping, Gardening or even Sound System in the company of the other students living at the house.