



November 11, 2015

Today, the Board of Trustees adopted amendments to the bylaws of The Cooper Union and related resolutions. These amendments and resolutions are intended to strengthen the governance of the institution and to establish a formal means to evaluate the feasibility of returning Cooper Union to a full-tuition scholarship model. They reflect and implement the changes provided for in the consent decree that was agreed with the New York State Attorney General and the Committee to Save Cooper Union in September. Despite the delay in the approval of the consent decree by the Supreme Court of the State of New York, we are proceeding with these changes now, in the spirit of moving forward together into this new chapter for Cooper Union.

Specifically, under the amended bylaws, student representation will increase to two voting members; alumni-elected trustees will number between five and nine (depending on the size of the board at any given time); and each of the four permanent faculties, as well as the part-time faculty and the staff, will elect a non-voting observer to the board. These additional elected alumni and student trustees on the board, together with the new faculty and staff observers, will bring fresh ideas, add resources and open up new and beneficial channels of communication with the larger Cooper Union community.

The bylaws also establish a Free Education Committee of the board, which will be charged with examining whether Cooper Union can return to a sustainable, full-tuition scholarship model that maintains Cooper Union's strong reputation for academic quality. The committee will be required to develop and propose to the board a strategic plan aimed at achieving this objective. The committee is to present its strategic plan in January 2018, with annual progress reports and interim recommendations in January 2016 and 2017.

With the board's action, we are prepared to embark on the important next steps to establish a strong financial plan for the future, and these changes provide a practical basis for collaboration among all stakeholders in this important endeavor. We must all work hard to rebuild trust and heal the fissures that have divided the community in the past, and we are appreciative of the constructive efforts of the leadership of the CUAA to facilitate engagement by alumni in this regard.

The financial challenges we face remain daunting, but we are confident that, working together with Cooper Union's extended community, we will be able to surmount them and set the future course for this institution we care so much about. This is undertaken with, and for, the students, faculty, staff and alumni who make Cooper Union the great college we are proud of.

Richard S. Lincer
Chairman, The Cooper Union Board of Trustees

