

Loving at a velocity where our minds and bodies were both optimizing on different planes of existence. Putting our bodies ahead of us, ahead of our minds, maintaining a distance, maintaining conditions and dynamics, choosing to stay where we put our bodies. Life as parametric. Do people build buildings to be walked around? I'm blind to my own vision! How do externalities dampen this reflex? How do they change/degrade/morph over time? Incoherency as situation. Courier on colored paper. These modes seem outdated, they date themselves. Empty mind in a time of sunsets. Site with a lot of totalizing statements! I'm struggling to literally "buy" my own time back, but from who? Like a soft knot in the ruins. Who owns my time? How is the exchange rate a debt? An experience that refuses to offer meaningful fulfillment. There's no complete/comprehensive translation of experience. Consider the obliqueness, consider the walk, consider the incidental inconceivability of knowing the full scope of possibility. What's provocative these days? None of this being "acceptable." Unethical opportunism. Let's make sure to raise the questions. Let's. Writing being looked over, repeatedly being overlooked. Trying to reproduce the world. What's really unthinkable these days? Relative autonomy or autonomy in spite of a shell breaking out of context, desperate and self aware. A turtle breaking out a shell breaking out an egg. The person who loses control of the consequences. People usually don't build a ship while sailing. Why are we ourselves? You can't stage life but that doesn't stop people from trying. If you start building it, you have to do the unthinkable. But what's really unthinkable these days? Small funny thought: painful incongruities govern life! Have I missed my prime? The old life-ruiner. Acutely oblique anti-marketing aspiration (asymptotic, half-life, diminishing returns), time, space, velocity. I can't see what's right in front of me! Forgiveness without condoning until they are "incomprehensibly" outside of an alternative? I know analogies develop (over time). Analogical, involuntary, existential. Opportunity dangles. Am I ever looking at you? Where are they? How to get

away from the idea of posing as harmless. False-provocations. I want to be a mirror. Picture me where I want to be. Look at me now! The kind of threat posed by books. Real counterculture has been eclipsed by heightened state intervention probably because of the cumulative nature of being. The focus being on the suffering of others to contextualize the success of others. "Middle happens." Inevitable, immobilized, capped on both sides by instability. A door that doesn't look like a friend? A conversation that undoes itself? A table that forgets how to be a table? Determined knowledge. Performance anxiety. Other scholars characterize it as a form of midwifing. You CAN calculate the future to the presentness of the present. Small force, interstitial, in between, hard to see happen. Replacing crisis in our creations that exist beyond. We were moving one way or another, we might as well be involved by authoring it instead of being consulted (if at all). This type of framing is "practically useful." Practically. I feel as though the world's changed around me and I haven't kept up or worse I've been left behind—it's worse because I don't even want to exist anymore. Buildings that forgot they're buildings. None of this interests me at all. I'm thinking about the past a lot, mostly I don't recognize we self. The ending no longer exists, the exist no longer exists, the entrance no longer exists, we've been inhabiting a mirage, the stalactile impossibility of stopping a lumbering institution that refuses to focus on the stated purpose. The stated purpose no longer exists. We've been inhabiting a. Where are the beneficiaries? Man as receiver, consumer, subject, author, builder. Materials existing for our use to do as we see fit. Mirage as a means of demonstrating implicit violence though historically the shock value is easily internalized and not often leveraged. Enacting beyond free. Aspiration is about oversimplified transactional exchanges. Everything is about oversimplified transactional exchanges. Small funny thought: painful incongruities govern life! Incoherency is the historical actuality of persons and events. How could we have no idea what I like these days. Reflections:

N.Y. / REGION

Bidding Farewell to a City's Precious Stone

OCT. 22, 2012



Mike Meehan, the owner of Portland Brownstone Quarries. Christopher Capozziello for The New York Times

The Appraisal

By ELIZABETH A.
HARRIS

Brownstones occupy a unique place in the New York City psyche, as one of the city's most prototypical signposts, like yellow cabs and fast walkers, yet are able to stir aching desire and teeth-baring jealousy. Everybody wants one.

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Thousands of these structures are crammed into the five boroughs, like sideways stacks of very expensive pancakes. As it turns out, most of them are not only cast from the same mold, but were also made from the same stone, a brown sandstone quarried in Portland, Conn.

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After being mined on and off for centuries, the [Portland Brownstone Quarries](#), the very last of a kind, closed down this year, and by the end of this month, the quarry’s final scraps of inventory should be gone.

Preservationists are bemoaning the end of an era, or at least of the chance for a perfect match for the city’s ubiquitous stone.

And as Portland’s diamond-studded saws have slowed to their final rest, some stone fabricators have begun to — lovingly, respectfully — hoard the stuff.

RELATED COVERAGE

Times Topic: The Appraisal



Brownstones on Berkeley Place in Park Slope, Brooklyn. Brian Harkin for The New York Times

“We’re all scrambling to grab that stone,” said George Heckel of [Pasvalco](#), stone fabricators in New Jersey. “If you’re thinking about achieving the look and feel of a New York City brownstone, you’re not going to get that anymore.”

Not everyone, however, is sad to say goodbye to this particular building block. That's because the stone, the object of so many New Yorkers' obsessions, is considered to be rather mediocre.

"I remember some quote saying it was the worst stone ever quarried," said Timothy Lynch, the executive director of the Buildings Department's forensic unit. "It's like New York City is covered in cold chocolate."

That old-time brownstone hater was likely to be Edith Wharton, who called it the "most hideous" stone ever quarried.

Today, architectural conservators and historians say that most of the city's "brownstone" facades have been replaced with brown cement-based masonry.

Brownstone began appearing in New York City buildings in a significant way during the first half of the 19th century, and it quickly became the stone of choice for row house developers. (Brownstones are actually brick houses built with a stone facing.) Stone from Portland's quarries came out of the ground near the Connecticut River, so it was easy to get it to New York City — as well as to other cities up and down the East Coast — and was relatively soft, which made it easy to carve.

Unfortunately that softness, along with corner-cutting by developers and the extremes of New York City's weather, made the stone liable to crumble, crack and flake.

"By the late 19th century, people were already complaining about this," said Andrew S. Dolkart, director of the [historic preservation program at Columbia University](#).

The Appraisal

A weekly column that scours the New York region for untold stories of real estate envy, excess and woe.

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|---|---------------------|
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The stone fell out of fashion, and by the 1940s, the Portland quarries, flooded by the Connecticut River in a major storm, were shuttered. It wasn't until the mid-1990s that Mike Meehan, a geologist with a background in coal exploration, reopened the ground at the edge of the quarry, slicing chunks of brownstone off a wall about 20 feet high and 650 feet long.

But most of the area is still filled with water, and Mr. Meehan's closest neighbor is a recreational water park, where zip lines crisscross an old brownstone quarry.

"We're up here breaking stones and there are people over there yelling, 'Yay!'" Mr. Meehan said. "It's a pleasant diversion at lunchtime."

Brownstone, which is really just a brown sandstone, is still quarried in a few spots around the world — including Britain, China and Utah — but stone fabricators and materials experts say that there is really nothing quite like the stone that comes from Portland. Much of Mr. Meehan's stone has been used in historic buildings and restoration projects, including Cooper Union, as well as lavish private homes.

"I'm telling you, he was our hero," said Michael Devonshire, an architectural conservator and materials expert at [Jan Hird Pokorny Associates](#), a New York architecture firm that specializes in preservation.

No matter where it's from, however, brownstone is no longer cheap. Jim Durham, the president of [Quarra Stone Company](#) in Madison, Wis., recently bought a dozen truckloads of stone from Mr. Meehan, the last of his large blocks. Mr. Durham estimated Portland Stone to be two or three times the price of Indiana limestone, the "vanilla ice cream" of stone, he said. So cast stone (generally cement based) or stucco substitutions (cement again) are common alternatives.

After nearly 20 years at the quarry, Mr. Meehan said his company had extracted what it could from the quarry without making significant investments to get more. The land, which he leases, has been put up for sale. At 63, he said, he is ready to move on.

But there is one more person who plans to hoard some of Mr. Meehan's

remaining little slabs: Mr. Meehan.

“I’m going to keep working the stuff for my retirement,” he said. “Bird baths, benches, things like that.”

Mr. Meehan has no intention of selling what he makes, he said. He just wants to carve away with his circular saw for fun. If his neighbors get upset about the noise, he added: “I’ll make each one of them a bird bath. And then how could they complain?”

A version of this article appears in print on October 23, 2012, on page A18 of the New York edition with the headline: Bidding Farewell To a City’s Precious Stone. [Order Reprints](#) | [Today’s Paper](#) | [Subscribe](#)

| | | |
|----------|----|---|
| 43:49:00 | TD | I think that's in this package. This doesn't look at a partnership with another college but it kind of explores the other two. It explores a hybrid plan in more detail than it explores number 3. But I think we could get some numbers for number 3. But it might be that the cash bill wouldn't be \$30 million a year because we're paying \$10 million a year interest and you got somebody trying to rebank it then you've got some cross cuts...\$15 million a year for five years and put \$75 million in the bank instead of \$150 |
| 44:00:00 | RF | I felt that case was light on the costs. The shut down case would be a lot more costs. <u>When you need to reinvent it you need to add a lot more costs</u> |
| 44:39:00 | VK | Wasn't a merger explored extensively during George's reign? I remember some discussions with NYU. I remember mentions of it, but I wasn't here so I don't know if anything ever came of it |
| 44:52:00 | DB | Well there was the Roosevelt Island engineering school thing |
| 44:56:00 | MB | Well it was mentioned...there was a discussion that I was aware of with NYU, which I thought was going to be the ultimate solution, you know we were just going to work for NYU, but they went ahead and bought Polytech, and that ended that conversation. But I don't think there was really, not that I know of, any real discussion with anybody else. |
| 45:21:00 | ME | All right for the sake of time why don't we listen what the plan is from now until November. Let's listen to Jamshed when he comes in and then we can throw ourselves at the table. At least we have a <u>good lag time between now and then.</u> |
| 45:30 | SL | Well I think in December, Mark. We really should have, because we're going to be voting in December and we don't want to vote on Hobson's choice. We don't want to have just one choice. That's not a vote and that's really not our jobs here. We should have at least 2 well thought out alternatives, perhaps 3, Mike's alternative, |

5 of 41

| | | |
|----------|----|--|
| | | and um give us a choice to point the school in a strategic direction. Just approving the hybrid plan—you don't need us for that. |
| 45:56:00 | ME | Well yeah I agree with that but I think we should not just sit back and do nothing. What happens in November is going to be crucial. When we hear back from the faculty and who knows maybe they come up something that would be wonderful. I'm more concerned about the easy way out that is charging tuition. It is an easy way out. From the art school I met with Day Gleeson the other day, trying out ways to charge for foreign students that come here for a post-bachelor's degree and other programs, and the engineers just might be saying oh what the hell we'll just charge tuition. That's a concern. So in the interest of time anything else on this, any other topics? |
| | | [short break, chatter, and muffled conversation] |
| 47:18:00 | SL | Well the times have changed and higher education is different.. In 2500 there will be no tenured faculty. Anyways. |
| 47:29:00 | ME | Times are changing, higher education is changing, the population demographics are changing, students are changing |
| 47:40:00 | DB | One of the things that's frustrating is that you know there's 10 years in between each raise in rent at the Chrysler building. It's unfortunate. |
| 47:56:00 | ME | Well we spoke a little bit about the potential of talking them down but... |
| 48:05:00 | DB | Is that a possible negotiation? |
| 48:06:00 | ME | I have a meeting with Rob Speyer [co-CEO Tishman Speyer] |
| 48:21:00 | RL | The question we don't know is the possibility of that. They've sold out most of their equity to investors so they have a limiting partnership |
| | | Ok...I don't have that much to report before we move on, but we changed the terms of the board commitment. The four year term will be kept but we've limited to two terms for that...so 8 years instead of the 12 that it was. This comes from the Whelan Group's recommendations. The board will now officially put in place a recommended |

PRESIDENT
BUZZKILL

PREZ
CAMCHILL
SOLD US OUT

ISN
OSSES

STAY







Resolution: 11-8-15

Voting Results: Passed (Y-29 N-3 A-0)

Aware of the difficulties and discomfort that transgender, gender non-conforming, intersex, and disabled students must face daily,

Noting that the facilities of the Cooper Union are largely inadequate in addressing the needs of the aforementioned students,

Reaffirming the commitment of Cooper Union's students to social progress and tolerance,

The Joint Student Council of the Cooper Union:

Resolves that all bathrooms be updated in the following ways:

- A.** All restrooms be converted to "gender neutral restrooms" by:
 - i.** Removing all current restroom signage and replacing with the appropriate "gender neutral" graphics,
 - ii.** Installing trash receptacles in the stalls of all bathrooms currently lacking them,
 - iii.** Removing the external locks for all private, single stall restrooms and replacing them with internal locks so that they may be accessed by all members of the community,

- B.** All restrooms be equipped with dispensers stocked with the following items free of charge: condoms, lubricant, dental dams, tampons, and pads.

Day 919: Bharucha Steps Down

On December 3rd, 2012, Free Cooper Union initiated a lock-in within the college's clocktower, publicly issuing a set of demands and principles towards preserving the Cooper Union's mission. Among the demands were a statement to the administration in support of free education, board reform, and President Jamshed Bharucha's resignation. 919 days after the demands were first issued, Bharucha has finally stepped down, following the early termination of his contract and an ongoing Attorney General investigation.

Today, we celebrate the additional resignations of:

- Mark Epstein, Trustee and Former Chairman of the Board
- Francois DeMenil, Trustee and Vice Chairman of the Board
- Catharine Bond Hill, Trustee
- Daniel Libeskind, Trustee
- Monica Vachher, Trustee
- Teresa Dahlberg, Dean of Engineering and Chief Academic Officer

These departures mark a sea change, calling for the realization of a true Cooper Union: an institution worthy of the radical mission on which it was founded. This future will depend on the tenacity of the community and continued public engagement, through cooperative oversight, committed participation, and honest critique of our own shortcomings. We must rebuild Cooper, not towards a nostalgic notion of what it once was, but towards a fervent vision that shines in all directions.

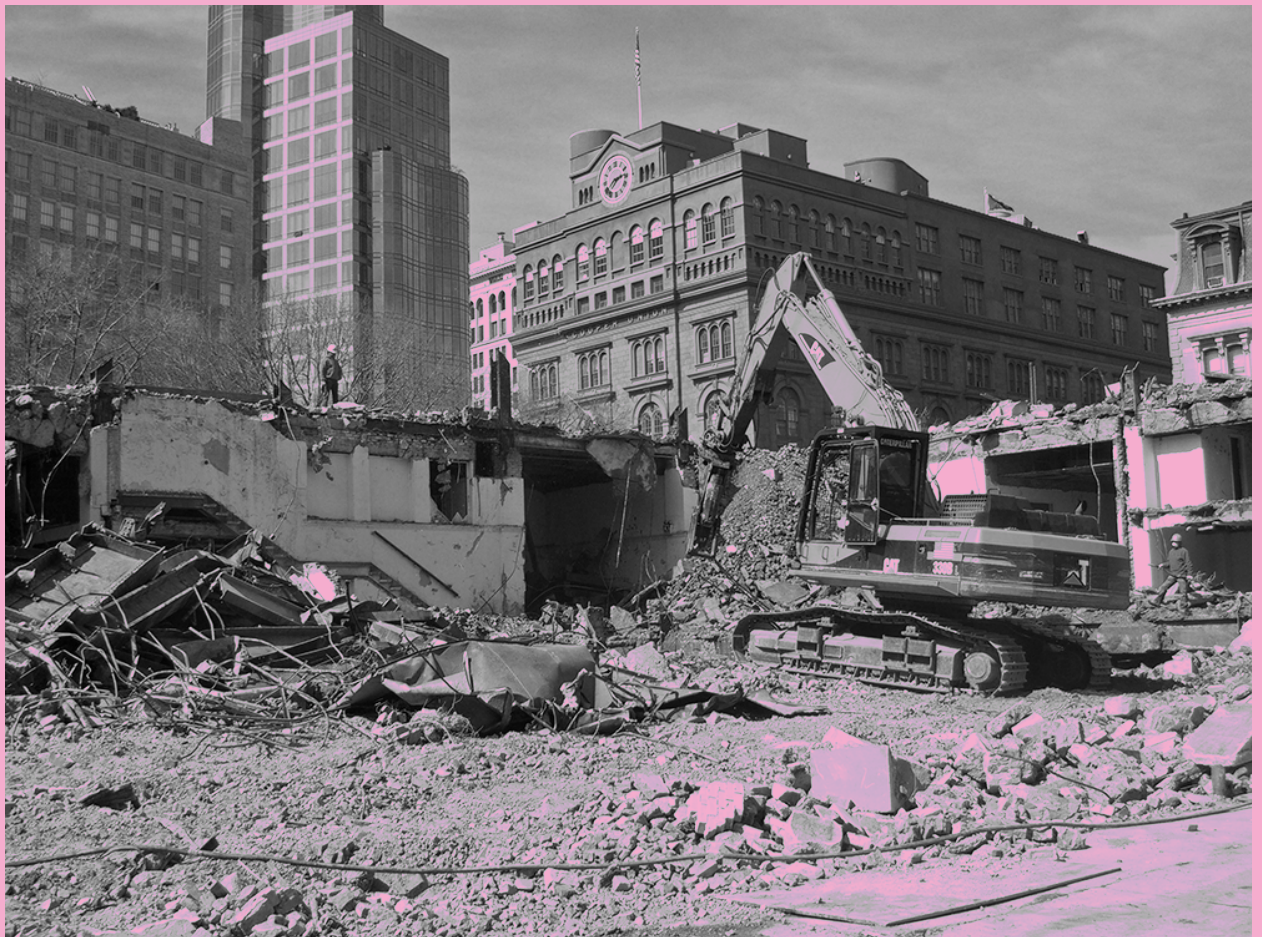
Getting rid of key players will not be enough. Implementing rigid structures, best practices, and good leaders will not be enough. Adjusting the variables within an existing model of higher education will not be enough. Moving forward will require acknowledging years of bitter conflict, comprehensively assessing our present state, envisioning painfully distant ideals, and working cooperatively.

Direct action works. We know it to be true so deeply that no newspaper, no court, no president, no board, and no administrator could undo this conviction. Collectively, our community has scratched the surface of what it means to gleefully, painfully, patiently dismantle the societal conditioning which implores us to never step out of line. We stand to lose everything if we allow ourselves to regress to the type of thinking that allowed this crisis to ferment over a period of decades.

Envisioning the students who would occupy his school, Peter Cooper once said, "I trust that they will rally around and protect it, and make it like a city set on a hill, that cannot be hid." As our administration disappears into hiding with petulant resignations, we affirm that now is always the time for principled action.

Demands

1. **Board votes to affirm Cooper Union's commitment to free education**, stop pursuing new tuition-based educational programs, and work to eliminate all ways in which students are charged for education.
2. **Reimbursement for all tuition payments collected to date.**
3. **Offer to reinstate former Dean of Students Linda Lemiesz and former Security Supervisor Owen Solomon**, who served the Cooper community for over two decades before being arbitrarily fired by Jamshed Bharucha.
4. **Re-establish official Working Group** of elected constituents, who are provided unrestricted access to financial information, to continue investigating tuition-free financial models.
5. **Authorize an independent forensic accounting of the college's finances**, starting with the past three decades, to be presented to the community.
6. **Monthly community forums with interim president Bill Mea** to review decisions, assess progress, and give feedback with an agreed upon stakeholder process.
7. **Structural changes to board operations** with the goal of creating open flows of information and democratic decision-making structures:
 - Record board meetings and make minutes publicly available.
 - Create additional voting seats on the board, elected directly by their constituencies, for: students from art, architecture, and engineering; faculty from art, architecture, engineering, and humanities; and staff
 - Implement a process by which board members may be removed through a vote of no confidence from the Cooper Union community, comprised of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and administrators.
8. **Resignations tendered by the following administrators**, who failed to publicly stand up for the college's mission in a time of crisis:
 - Mitchell Lipton, Vice President of Enrollment Services
 - Stephen "Dean" Baker, Vice President of Student Affairs
 - Justin Harmon, Vice President of Communications
 - Lawrence Cacciatore, Board Secretary and Chief of Staff
 - Abby Davis, Assistant Director of Admissions
 - William Germano, Dean of Humanities
 - Bonnie John, Director of Computation and Innovation
 - Anita Raja, Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Programs



Rowan Kaiser

3

"The Story of Nonstop"

Presented at the State of the College Address, June 20, 2008

I'm Rowan Kaiser, class of 2005, and co-CM for the summer of '08. It's kind of amazing to be standing here after being out there last time. I hope I can be half as interesting as last year's State of the College. I'm here putting my history degree to good use, trying to tell the story of Nonstop Antioch, both the name and the idea.

Our movement to Save Antioch starts around Reunion 2007, where hundreds of alumni, including many of you, gather and declare that they are "ashamed to let it die." I personally – and I doubt I'm alone here – most strongly come to believe that we can, and have to, save the college when emerita faculty Dimi Reber reads a statement from the faculty that they are going to continue to fight. At the heart of the alumni movement is respect for the faculty as the core of what we're fighting for, and the Reunion 2007 Resolution demonstrates the alumni commitment to rebuilding the institution around its teachers.

The Village of Yellow Springs is also instrumental in our effort, and as faculty member Chris Hill has said, if there's a silver lining in the events of the past year, it is the strengthening of the bonds between the college and village communities. That connection is so strong that, over the last year, many Antiochians state that if we cannot convince the Antioch University Board of Trustees to allow the college to remain open, we should take our education and our faculty, staff, and students into "exile" – into the local community.

The first mention of this comes in June, shortly after the suspension is announced, even before Reunion. Alum (and Horace Mann relative) Art Dole '46 suggests on the alumni-chat email list that we form a "Horace Mann College" with the faculty, staff and students.

For the next several months, the idea of taking the community and going into exile is floated consistently by community members and alumni. Professor Hassan Rahmanian speaks to this while discussing "Plan B" when the ACCC visit AdCil to discuss their plans for a Letter of Intent which is supposed to lead to independence.

In August, Beth Gutelius '00 coins the phrase "I heart Nonstop Antioch" to make t-shirts

in advance of the emergency Trustee meeting in Cincinnati. Reaction from certain alumni is lukewarm. Fortunately, she doesn't listen to me.

Beth conveys her phrase to a number of students and the Community Managers, and "Nonstop Antioch" becomes the primary slogan of resilience and celebration during such public actions as the Founders' Day Parade, the community procession to meet the trustees at the October Homecoming, and the demonstration at the McGregor building in March.

The initial deadline for the ACCC/university negotiations is set for the Board of Trustees' meeting in February in Los Angeles. In advance of this, the independent, anonymous community publication, *The Blaze*, puts out a call for the community's ideas for Antioch-in-Exile, just in case things do not go well.

Things do not go particularly well. During the Trustees' meeting, the university administration decides to trumpet their "reaffirmation" of the suspension of the college. As the Antioch Confidential film says – the community continues the struggle.

The week after that BOT meeting, the Alumni Board/College Revival Fund directors hold their regular meeting on campus. The Alumni Board and faculty work together to solve the problem of how to encourage faculty to stay during this uncertain period. Academics from the Alumni Association work intensely with college faculty to develop a significant enough plan that, by the end of the weekend, the CRF commits significant financial support to what they decide to call – after several meetings of deliberation about the best name – Nonstop Antioch.

There are three major components of the Nonstop Antioch movement. First, the educational component: the Nonstop Liberal Arts Institute, which you will hear much more about soon. Second, the friendly acquisition, that the Keene Resolution makes possible. Finally, the legal component. Shortly after the university's "reaffirmation," the college faculty refile their lawsuit to keep the college open. Money is needed for all arms of the movement to succeed, so therefore the third

major component is the fundraising.

The "Nonstop Antioch" phrase gains extra currency when the staff of the Institutional Advancement office – the fundraisers! – are "set free" by the university and college administration. They are rehired by the College Revival Fund, who also rent out an office on Xenia Avenue so that fundraising may continue. A sign in front of office declares the building to be the "Nonstop Antioch Campus" or Headquarters.

Meanwhile, in response to the poor leadership shown by university administrators, some elected members of AdCil found AdCil-in-Exile, which becomes Madeil, which becomes Nonstop AdCil, and finally ends up as the Executive Council – ExCil. The main frustration which creates ExCil is the feeling that normal college governance channels are not being allowed to function for the planning of the future of the institution. ExCil fills that need, and is now the primary governance structure of Nonstop Antioch.

The faculty have their own curricular planning continuing. They hold two retreats, in March and May. Community members working on Nonstop Antioch determine the need for

coordination of the necessary functions, and develop an "Executive Collective" of coordinators: Educational Offerings.

Administration, and External Relations. The Executive Collective, ExCil, the CRF, the faculty, Community Government, and as many alumni, students, staff, and villagers as we can get are working – nonstop – on Nonstop.

That is the quick version where we're at. But I'd also like to say a few words about why we are where we're at.

Many people have spoken about how they "hope" that Antioch can be saved. "Hope," in my mind, means that you desire something to happen which is outside of your control, and that someone else will accomplish this desire. Throughout the last year, the vast majority of us have had "hope" that "the negotiations" would succeed. We can still hope for that. However, our consistent response to setbacks at the board level has been not depression, but resolution. Resolution to organize so we could do whatever we could do, whoever we happened to be.

By that reasoning, I do not have "hope" that Nonstop will succeed. I have optimism. I have the optimism that we have the talent, money, energy, and determination to make the right things happen. It's in our hands, nobody else's. I have optimism that you all will join us.



OUR COMMUNITY HAS BEEN STUCK IN SOME KIND OF FINGERTRAP FOR YEARS!
LET'S COME TOGETHER TO SWEAT OUT OUR NERVOUS ENERGY
MOVE INFORMATION THROUGH OUR BODIES
DEBUNK WHY-BOTHER-DOING-ANYTHING
JUMP OUR COLLECTIVE BATTERY
ENVISION THE NEXT CENTURY OF COMMUNITY BUILDING
CONCEIVE OF DEEP ENGAGEMENT
HAVE A BARN RAISING
UNDERSTAND THE SHUFFLE
LEARN TO LOVE AGAIN
BUILD INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY TOGETHER
TALK TALK TALK
ABOUT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES
ABOUT WHAT KIND OF CULTURE WE'RE TRYING TO BUILD
ABOUT THE SHIFT IN EDUCATION THAT COOPER COULD STAND FOR
ABOUT THE STONES WE COULD NEVER LIFT
TAP INTO THE POWER OF DISPLACED COMMUNITY
FOSTER A CULTURE BASED ON MUTUAL RESPECT
CREATE LASTING HABITS
BRING MATERIALS TO SHARE
ASK A QUESTION
JUGGLE NONLINEAR NARRATIVES
UNFLATTEN THE YEARS
LISTEN TO EACH OTHER
SIT AROUND A TABLE AS PEOPLE, NOT AS AVATARS
REMEMBER WHERE WE WERE, HOW WE FELT, AND WHAT WE WANTED
CONFRONT OUR FEARS AND EXPECTATIONS
LARP OURSELVES
DRINK COFFEE AND PLAY CARDS
TAKE A NAP IN THE HAMMOCK
AND SALSA DANCE WITH OUR PARADIGMS.
FREE EDUCATION TO ALL!





A Message from Chairman Lincer on behalf of the Board of Trustees

1 message

campus-notice@cooper.edu <campus-notice@cooper.edu>

Tue, Jun 23, 2015 at 4:44 PM

Dear Students and Parents:

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Trustees to offer assurance that the quality of the educational experience our students receive will remain our top priority in this transition period and for the future. Cooper's vice president for finance and administration, William Mea, will assume interim leadership responsibilities on July 1. We expect to begin a series of campus meetings in coming weeks to reengage with the community about the next chapter for The Cooper Union. In the fall, the board will form a presidential search committee that will include representation from the faculty, students and alumni.

Our faculty continue to attract classes of top students who demonstrate exceptional talent and preparation. I invite you to see the recently released data on the class to enroll this fall, as well as the recent online "snapshots" of new graduates in each of art, architecture and engineering. Cooper's students are the best reason we can work with confidence for its future.

We continue to confront the lawsuit stemming from the change in the scholarship policy. The need to avoid public comment about the litigation has been frustrating, but we remain hopeful about an outcome that can serve Cooper well. It is worth underscoring that speculation on social media about potential outcomes in the case are conjecture and do not necessarily accurately reflect the facts.

I want close by assuring you of our commitment to the students. Our budget provides for the maintenance of all scholarships at the level provided to students when they first enroll, ensuring one of the best educations in America. It assumes annual tuition increases to cover inflation only.

We look forward to greater community engagement and I invite you to direct any questions to communications@cooper.edu. We will do our best to respond meaningfully.

Richard S. Lincer

Chairman, Board of Trustees



Pizza Outside Tomorrow

1 message

campus-notice@cooper.edu <campus-notice@cooper.edu>

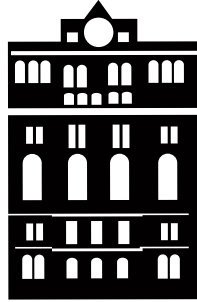
Tue, Nov 3, 2015 at 2:29 PM

Wednesday November 4th may be the last nice day before the cold sets in and I thought that it would be a good opportunity to sit outside and eat pizza. Accordingly, pizza will be available to all students between Noon and 2pm tomorrow outside of the Foundation Building; on the west side as the construction company is cooperating with us on space use. Come eat some free pizza. Stay or go as you like. Enjoy the sunshine and a brief break from classes, labs and studios. The pizza will be available until it is gone, so try to get there early. Hope to see you tomorrow.

Bill Mea
Acting President







The Way Forward

Prepared for the Second
Community Summit
the Great Hall | April 26, 2012

Authored by the Cooper community
info@friendsofcooperunion.org
friendsofcooperunion.org

Booklet Design: Sam Holleran
Spot Illustrations: Taylor Hand
Layout: Xenia Batanes

**“I made a resolute determination that if I could ever get the means, I would build an institution and throw its doors open at night so that the boys and girls of this city, who had no better opportunity than I to enjoy means of information, would be enabled to improve and better their condition, fitting them for all the various and useful purposes of life.”
— Peter Cooper, 1859**

The Cooper Union was founded in 1859 by industrialist, inventor and philanthropist Peter Cooper in New York City. Acutely aware of his own lack of a formal education, Cooper's lifelong dream was to create an institution that would provide free instruction to ambitious young men and women.

Today we celebrate Cooper Union for its unique mission to provide full-tuition, merit-based scholarships to all enrolled students, and for the lifetime of creative and intellectual mobility that the full-tuition policy enables. Students graduate from Cooper Union unburdened by significant student debt, allowing them an important measure of financial freedom to continue to innovate, create and learn after graduation. In this moment where national student debt has surpassed \$1 trillion, Cooper's full scholarship policy is more important than ever.

Yet Cooper Union provides more than solely financial assistance. By the same token that Cooper students graduate unburdened by excessive debt, a Cooper education also has the power to release students from any insecurities or prejudices they might have about who in our society is permitted to create and innovate, whose contribution is valued and what opportunities might lie ahead. Because no amount of wealth, privilege or influence determines who attends Cooper Union, students from wildly different walks of life are able to teach and learn from one another trusting that all hold in common the resource most valued by the institution: ability.

At the heart of the school's mission and imbued in its ethos is the ever-more-radical notion that neither money nor politics should be decisive in determining the cultural and intellectual life of a city or a people, much less the imaginative life of an individual. Yet now

Cooper Union finds itself in a crisis where money seems to govern the future and imaginations are threatening to fail: the trustees are considering abandoning the historic mission of full-tuition scholarships and merit-based admissions altogether in favor of a conventional, tuition-based financial model that will irrevocably change the character of the school.

In the meantime, Cooper students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends have come together to imagine alternatives. Since the President's announcement in October 2011 that Cooper Union may charge tuition, we have been working tirelessly to understand the nature of the challenges Cooper faces, and to come up with viable immediate and long-term solutions. Cooper Union is bigger than a building. It embodies an ideal we hold dear to our democracy. It is unconscionable that we should allow that ideal to be destroyed without imagining every possible alternative.

So how are we going to save Cooper Union? Because the root of this crisis is not only financial, we have come up with ways to improve Cooper's civic presence, academics and mission. Despite having limited access to the numbers, we have identified what we believe to be sensible first steps toward closing the deficit. Finally, during the long, fraught and sometimes tedious process of mapping out what seems to us the right and just path for Cooper Union in the coming months and years, we've discovered what is perhaps the most crucial element to Cooper's survival: a sense of community that transcends disciplines, reaches across generations, and, in this moment of confusion, has the vision and spirit to point Cooper Union in the right direction.

**We are the Cooper community
and this is The Way Forward.**

TIMELINE

JUNE 30, 2011 – Last day of fiscal year 2011 • Last day of Dr. George Campbell's presidency • Last day of work for Susan Lynch, Director of Alumni Relations

JULY 1, 2011 - First day of Dr. Jamshed Bharucha's presidency • First day of Alumni Council 2012, President Peter Cafiero assumes office.

SEPTEMBER 6, 2011 - First day of classes (fall semester)

OCTOBER 4, 2011 - Cooper Union Alumni Association (CUAA) Council convenes. Dr. Bharucha makes mention about financial crisis facing the school.

OCTOBER 18, 2011 - Inauguration ceremony for Dr. Jamshed Bharucha • On the eve of Bharucha's October 2011 inauguration, the most vital part of the mission statement mysteriously disappeared from the "Mission" webpage. Thanks to community intervention, the statement that Cooper Union "admits undergraduates solely on merit and awards full scholarships to all enrolled students" was restored to the mission in time for the ceremony. Friends of Cooper Union was formed thereafter in order to ensure the merit-based admission and full-tuition scholarship policy remain the heart of the School's mission.

OCTOBER 27, 2011 - Henry Chapman launches Save Cooper Union Without Petition on SignOn.org based on comments made by Dr. Bharucha to a class and information that a Board of Trustees meeting date has been moved up

OCTOBER 28, 2011 - Greg Skiano launches As Free As Air and Water website on belief that December 7, 2011 Board of Trustees meeting date move to November 8, 2011 is to leave Cooper Union Community out of decision process

OCTOBER 29, 2011 - Jesicka Alexander Labud opens SAVE COOPER UNION facebook group.

OCTOBER 30, 2011 - Dr. Jamshed Bharucha question & answer session moderated by art student council

OCTOBER 31, 2011 (Halloween) Dr. Jamshed Bharucha question & answer session moderated by engineering student council • Early edition of New York Times article announcing Revenue Task Force and first public comment on charging tuition • Sean Cusack creates first Cooper Union Task Force on Facebook (later given own URL and moved off Facebook to wiki)

NOVEMBER 1, 2011 - "Reinvention of The Cooper Union" letter from Dr. Bharucha to Cooper Union Community • Letter from CUAA President Peter Cafiero to Alumni

NOVEMBER 2, 2011 - Walk-Out, Work-Out, Act-Out protest in front of Foundation Building

NOVEMBER 4, 2011 - Letter with pie charts from Dr. Bharucha and TC Westcott on Cooper finances

NOVEMBER 6, 2011 - Barry Drogin launches *Alumni Pioneer* website

NOVEMBER 7, 2011 - Alumni Council convenes an abbreviated meeting • Open Forum in Great Hall with Board of Trustees Chair Mark Epstein • Letter with graph of revenues and expenses from 1967 to 2011 from Board of Trustees

NOVEMBER 8, 2011 - Board of Trustees meet and elect Francois de Menil as Vice Chair

NOVEMBER 9, 2011 - Vice President of Business for Cooper Union, TC Westcott, releases letter with new graph and pie charts • Cooper Union Commons website launched

NOVEMBER 10, 2011 - "Reinvent the Annual Fund" fundraising e-mail to alumni

NOVEMBER 13, 2011 - Alumni Elected Trustee John Huddy submits letter of resignation to the Board of Trustees.

NOVEMBER 15, 2011 - Letter from CUAA President Peter Cafiero urging unrestricted giving

NOVEMBER 21, 2011 - Cooper Pioneer interview with Dr. Bharucha with announcement of what would become Expense Reduction Task Force

NOVEMBER 22, 2011 - Office of Alumni Relations (now Development, Alumni Affairs) deletes announcement of December 5 community summit from CUAA events email to Alumni

NOVEMBER 23, 2011 - WNYC Brian Lehrer Show with Times reporter and President Bharucha call-in • TC Westcott provides FY 2000 through FY 2010 consolidated financial statements to The Alumni Pioneer

NOVEMBER 24, 2011 (Thanksgiving)Alumni Pioneer publishes first analysis of consolidated financial statements

NOVEMBER 27, 2011 - Alumni Pioneer publishes portrait of Dr. Bharucha, including statements from a March 2011 interview with Education Update in which Dr. Bharucha doubts that the full-tuition scholarship is the main reason for students to apply to Cooper

NOVEMBER 29, 2011 - "On The Table: An Exhibition for Free Education" opens in Foundation Building colonnade (runs through December 2), premiering "Cooper Union Tuition" YouTube video (Hitler's Downfall meme)

DECEMBER 5, 2011 - Free Cooper Union: A Community Summit in Great Hall, followed by Friends of Cooper Union Strategies (FOCUS) Breakout Session #1

DECEMBER 12, 2011 - "Money On The Table" pledge site launched www.freecooper.com

DECEMBER 13, 2011 - Presidential Address in Great Hall announcing membership of Revenue Task Force

DECEMBER 16, 2011 - Release of Board of Trustees Financial Statement and Summary

DECEMBER 21, 2011 - Last day of classes (fall semester)

DECEMBER 22, 2011-JANUARY 3, 2012 (Staff Holiday) - William Sandholm leaves Board of Trustees, Mark Epstein takes charge of Astor Place Holding Corporation

JANUARY ??, 2012 - Revenue Task Force launches website

JANUARY 5, 2012 - FOCUS Breakout Session #2

JANUARY 10, 2012 - Trustee Webinar describing consolidated financial statements.

JANUARY 17, 2012 - First day of classes (spring semester) • First meeting of Revenue Task Force

JANUARY 18, 2012 - Special Alumni Council meeting to discuss January 13, 2011 draft resolution "To Make All Reasonable Efforts To Raise Funds And Maintain A Tuition Free Cooper Union" (most of meeting devoted to nominating committee report instead)

JANUARY 25, 2012 - Cooper Union website posts FY 2011 consolidated financial statements

JANUARY 26, 2012 - FOCUS Breakout Session #3

JANUARY 30, 2012 - President letter on website, membership of Expense Reduction Task Force, and TEDx - Revenue Task Force launches website

FEBRUARY ??, 2012 - Work Makes Work and On the Table

FEBRUARY 8, 2012 - alumni council passes resolution and published it 3/31/12.

FEBRUARY 12, 2012 - Founders Day Wreath Laying Ceremony Student Protest

FEBRUARY 21, 2012 - FOCUS pin up

FEBRUARY 29, 2012 - FOCUS Breakout Session #4

MARCH 3-4, 2012 - Bruce High Quality Foundation Production of Animal Farm, the Musical.

MARCH 16, 2012 - Revenue Task Force revises website and begins to accept formal proposals

MARCH 21, 2012 - FOCUS Breakout Session #5

APRIL 8, 2012 - Revenue Task Force concludes proposal acceptance period

APRIL 16, 2012 - Gothamist is "punked" by student Alan Lundgard

APRIL 17, 2012 - No Strings Attached Student Demonstration

APRIL 26, 2012 - Second community summit in Great Hall featuring panel discussions

MAY 9, 2012 - Last day of classes (spring semester)

MAY 22, 2012 - Commencement

JUNE 30, 2012 - Last day of fiscal year 2012

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

MISSION AND ACADEMICS

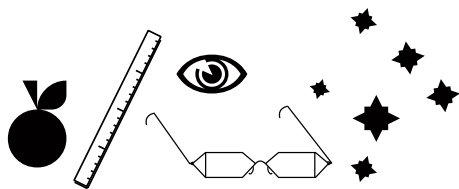
- Incorporate the mission into humanistic study
- Involve the three schools
- Engage faculty

FINANCIAL

- Focus on the \$6 million "primary" (non-interest) deficit: choose from palette of \$5.6 million in operational savings and \$2.1 million in revenue opportunities
- Defer administrative compensation
\$460,000 annual savings
- Replace academic deans with rotating faculty
-\$650,000 annual savings
- Move out of 30 Cooper Square
\$700,000 annual savings
- Minimize noncritical expenses
\$1.9 million annual savings
- Reduce costs of "Supporting Services"
\$2 million annual savings
- Reposition Cooper-area real estate assets
\$500,000 annual revenue
- Invest in innovative community ventures
\$100,000 initial revenue
- Fundraise on strength of Cooper's vision
\$2 million annual revenue
- Approach foundations for institutional support
- Seek better terms with MetLife once steps have been taken
- Promote fiscal governance and responsibility
- Define and agree on "what is so"

COMMUNITY

- Be a good neighbor
- Grow down
- Fix the Cooper Union Alumni Association
- Promote collaboration and communication



Mission & Academic Way Forward

Cooper Union has a history of ambitious and engaging programs designed to address the needs of the students of the day. Accordingly, the courses of study have evolved since 1859, but the basic goals of the curriculum remain the same. As Peter Cooper wrote in his letter to the Trustees of The Cooper Union:

“My hope is, to place this institution in the hands and under the control of men that will both know and feel the importance of forever devoting it, in the most effectual manner, to the moral, mental and physical improvement of the rising generation.”

The Mission and Academic Way Forward calls for a reintroduction of the philosophy and purpose of Peter Cooper into the culture and curriculum of Cooper Union, and for the promotion of new forms of collaboration and innovation between the three schools.

Mission & Academic Way Forward

Through outstanding academic programs in architecture, art and engineering, The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art prepares talented students to make enlightened contributions to society.

The College admits undergraduates solely on merit and awards full scholarships to all enrolled students. The institution provides close contact with a distinguished, creative faculty and fosters rigorous, humanistic learning that is enhanced by the process of design and augmented by the urban setting. Founded in 1859 by Peter Cooper, industrialist and philanthropist, The Cooper Union offers public programs for the civic, cultural and practicable enrichment of New York City.

—Mission of The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, adopted 2000.

The Cooper Union, unlike many colleges, was not founded with a distinct mission or religious purpose. In 1859, the founder did articulate a clear vision that the institution, through the advancement of science and art, would provide students with the practical means to improve their lives and develop an independence of means and of thought. Peter Cooper had a lifelong horror of debt and dependency, both financial and intellectual. His institution was to devise new means to create innovative careers, engaged citizens, and a workable city.

As The Cooper Union became more like an undergraduate college, offering degrees in particular disciplines, it has produced, through community wide processes, a number of statements of mission. Common to all colleges, such statements form the basis of self-assessment and accreditation. They present the goals to which the institution aspires and suggest the means to reach them. The mission statement should reflect the ethos and history of the college, inform curricula decisions, and be examined regularly by the whole community.

INITIATIVE ONE

Incorporate the Mission into Humanistic Study

Chief among Peter Cooper’s wide-ranging interests were political theory and social science. In his own words: “the subject of the science of government should forever be one of preeminent importance in the course of instruction.” To that end, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science should fulfill its potential as the humanistic link between the schools.

Instill culture and curriculum with founder's vision

At various times during The Cooper Union's history, students have been enrolled not only in the institution, but also more actively in Peter Cooper's vision.

This has occurred in various and inconsistent ways. The question of how Cooper Union carries out Peter Cooper's mandate has been framed sometimes in relation solely to alumni giving in support of the school, sometimes described as embedded in a history of real estate transaction and tax law, sometimes brought to light with great clarity in moments of financial crisis.

Considering the important role alumni have in the financial health of the school and the intangible support they provide through publicizing and highlighting the greatness of Cooper Union and the founder's vision to the greater community, the utmost importance should be placed on introducing Cooper Union students to Peter Cooper's philosophy as early as possible during their education. The many ways Cooper Union has contributed to social movements and political activism should also be discussed with the students - everything from hosting Abraham Lincoln in 1860 when he presented his "Right Makes Might" speech, to housing Susan B. Anthony in offices in the Foundation Building to the founding of the NAACP, and continuing on today through the hosting of literary, social, and environmental speakers and activists.

By instilling these values into the culture and curriculum, the emphasis should not be on financial support after graduation; rather, curriculum should be developed to educate students on the "why's and how's" that brought Peter Cooper to his conclusion that education should be attainable and reachable by all who desired it - with the resultant conclusion that this is made possible in part by the financial support of alumni.

Engage HSS faculty

Using Peter Cooper's life and work as a model, and focusing on the mission statement which drives Cooper Union students towards a more humanistic - and holistic - way of studying, the Humanities and Social Sciences should be reinvigorated as the bridge between the design curriculum, and the means to bring students together in understanding what it means to participate in a meritocracy with true creative license and ability. The mission can frame further revision of the cultural and historical components of the HSS core - those important philanthropic, scientific, environmental and economic upheavals over the last two centuries - better preparing students to enter a world where rapid change

"Without the requirement of any tuition payment the members of this diverse meritocracy are able to engage each other as equals in a free and open exchange of ideas for the sole purpose learning from each other and teaching each other. Cooper Union's tuition-free policy is not merely an aspect of its mission, it has become its fundamental basis. Only a tuition-free model and merit-based admissions fully guarantee true equality among all students."—Ben Degen, A'98, 1st Comm Summit

seems to be the only certainty.

Further, as so many core and elective curriculum courses are structured to meet program goals and accreditation requirements, we should also endeavor to incorporate the mission statement and institutional goals into the academic offerings of the school. Much as Peter Cooper encouraged a wide range of social scientific and humanistic studies with the ultimate effect of creating a well educated and active citizen, so should each course be developed and offered to the student body. As the mission statement says: "The institution provides close contact with a distinguished, creative faculty and fosters rigorous, humanistic learning that is enhanced by the process of design and augmented by the urban setting." Course objectives should identify for students the ways in which the subject matter is approached humanistically, the design assumptions involved, or their relations to the urban environment. Additionally, at other design-focused schools, and indeed at Cooper Union, often students are not fully engaged with humanities and social sciences once their core curriculum requirements are completed. This is often because design curriculums are so rigorous and the course-load so overloaded that additional classes are not voluntarily taken by students. By finding room for more free electives, and by engaging the HSS faculty to augment design courses with humanistic content, Cooper Union could become an innovative leader in mission-driven academics.

INITIATIVE TWO

Involve the Three Schools

Peter Cooper was interested in entrepreneurship, but more broadly in innovation. He intended that The Cooper Union would provide the knowledge for workers to improve and expand the very fields they chose to pursue. The education in all four faculties at the institution aims to produce a critical understanding of the disciplines, not merely the acquisition of a set of workplace skills. Happily, there is no greater area of innovation possible than between the three schools that make up the degree programs at The Cooper Union.

A goal to foster a culture of collaboration in the academic programs of the three schools would set proof to this innovative spirit. A cross-discipline curriculum committee should be implemented to develop and implement creative ways for students to engage in the work of their peers. Some suggestions include

prioritizing opportunities for students to interact - either through cross-disciplinary elective credits that are advertised as equally important between the three schools, or by expanding finals and review week and publicizing reviews, presentations, and crits across all schools - allowing students and faculty to learn from their peers. Project-based courses with group work components can be developed that teach the same concepts to all students, but are graded between the disciplines in ways that are specific to each course of study. This would not only help keep electives filled with a diverse group from each school, but would teach each student what their peers in other schools are graded on and are prioritized in learning.

Simon Ko (A '10)



To say that attending Cooper Union has fundamentally changed the way I see and interact with the world would be a severe understatement. My belief that higher education can change a person's nature came from the people and resources that I was fortunate enough to encounter and receive at The Cooper Union. It troubles me that the essence of the institution may change irreversibly if succeeding generations of students were to be charged for tuition.

In the winter of 2007, my father lost his job. At the time, it was hard to see that it indicated the beginning of what would be a giant shift in the political, economic, and cultural climate. My father's situation began to affect my life and education as soon as he was laid off. Like many other Americans, my family began to re-evaluate our lifestyle. Every type of expense was scrutinized and debated, and anything considered non essential was eliminated. My parents and I came to depend heavily on credit, and to this day we still have considerable debts to pay. The idea of completing my education on time with my peers was at risk. I discussed ideas about how I could take time off from school to find temporary work and help pay bills. However, I was encouraged to continue with my studies despite the enormous amount of stress and anxiety that burdened my parents for over two years. I think about how extraordinary it was that I was able to receive a full tuition scholarship during such a stressful time. To learn that this blessing could be taken away from succeeding generations of students causes me to feel guilt and shame.

A full tuition scholarship based on merit is needed more than ever. Through my four years at the Cooper Union, I failed to realize just how endearing the school's gift was to me and my fellow students. I am inspired by the spirit and audacity of an institution that builds upon a moral and ethical belief; that simply, higher education should be free. It is truly a rare conviction in the context of our time, and to see that disappear would indicate the loss of a truly outstanding virtue.

Let us fight not just for the present, but for the future generations that may pass through those battered front doors—that they may receive the same kinds of generosity and opportunities that I received in learning that there is a much greater, richer, deeper, and better world out there, and that they may reach an institution that will surprise and change them through its radical spirit.

"The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit." —Nelson Henderson



INITIATIVE THREE

Engage the Faculty

As greater responsibility is demanded of the alumni and the administration, similarly, it is important that the faculty - those who will shape future alumni - should be held to high standards and develop a greater sense of community and engagement. While social interactions of faculty should be trusted to develop on their own, a sense of Cooper Union-wide community should be purposefully encouraged. One way to do this is to focus on those who are being introduced to the school as full-time faculty. As part of the interview process, basic materials regarding Peter Cooper should be introduced to ensure that the academic values of the institution are preserved by new faculty. In addition, final candidates often give presentations as part of the interview process. These presentations should be opened to the full school and advertised to faculty, staff, and students to attend. The merit of encountering the many-varied individuals who comprise the larger Cooper Union community is the aid it provides to both the candidate and the hiring faculty in evaluating if someone will be a good match for those they may one day interact with.

While many classes at Cooper Union are already taught by adjunct faculty who are working professionals, introducing students to practical applications by experienced and active professionals cannot be over-rated. Currently, guest lecturing positions are offered at the discretion of faculty, who augment curricula with this interaction. Solidifying this approach by offering a required seminar course with guest lecturers would benefit the students. Better, there could be an incentive placed on the guest lecturers to present technical material with clear interaction between students and lecturer. A rubric should be circulated to the guest lecturers well ahead of their scheduled discussion with clarification on the goals of the course and the expected forms of interaction with the students. While a guest lecturer is a volunteer, their important role as ambassadors from the world of the professions and practice should be acknowledged and leveraged.

Additionally, while academic and curriculum decisions and strategies are best left to the experts, many alumni have valuable input to share with their former professors regarding current developments in science and art. A feedback loop should be nurtured to create a culture that welcomes regular visits from alumni. This could tie in with the proposed "Deputy Curricula Liaison to Students" role described in the Alumni Association initiative of the Community Section. A formalized, regular roundtable discussion or open forum could facilitate the open sharing of this information between faculty, students, and alumni - and make connections between experts to help keep Cooper at the forefront in the advancement of science and art.

Sangamithra Iyer (CE '99)



When I was accepted to Cooper Union, a local newspaper wrote a story on me saying that I was following in the footsteps of my paternal grandfather, a civil engineer who was a follower of Gandhi. I never met my grandfather, who passed away long before I was born, and knew as much about him then as I did Peter Cooper, which is to say not very much. I learned that both men born on different continents in different eras, one an industrialist, one devoted to the revitalization of the rural villages, shared certain things, most notably a commitment to equity, hard work, the upliftment of the social classes and empowerment of women.

My grandfather was an engineer who worked for the British in Burma, in the 1930s, when he had a radical shift in thought and gave up all worldly possessions and moved his family back to Southern India to join the Freedom Movement. In his newspaper, *Young India*, Gandhi was calling for an army of volunteers to go to the villages and teach sanitation and hygiene. My grandfather responded to this call. As an engineer and water diviner (another coupling of art and science), he developed wells and water supply in the villages surrounding a rural town called Kallakurichi. At the time, many of the poor and 'untouchables' had been denied access to share wells and public water supply.

My grandfather home schooled his thirteen children to be self-reliant and wanted his eight daughters to be financially independent and educated. He was against having a dowry and believed women should have the right of inheritance. He wanted his children to earn their way on their own merit, not by who their family was. He said if they grew up to be good citizens, then people should ask who raised them. To my father, who devoted his life to social work, my acceptance at Cooper Union represented several things. It was both the fulfillment of the American Dream, and a continuation of a family legacy of social responsibility.

I often said that 'I came to Cooper Union because it was free, but that is not why I stayed.' It was the culture created by a free education. Although tuition was free, I would hesitate to call it a "free ride." Ride implies a sense of ease. Cooper Union was an opportunity for self-propulsion. We learned to swim. We had no pool.

For three years, I shared a one-bedroom apartment with two other girls a block away from school. I slept in a tiny loft storage space that was six feet wide by seven feet long by four feet high. It was big enough to fit a mattress and box spring and had a platform where I could put my computer. I sat on the edge of my mattress and worked on problem sets by hand or tinkered with Excel spreadsheets until the wee hours of the morning, usually on the phone with one of my classmates, figuring things out together. Sometimes we'd be working on different projects, and we'd stay on the phone together, in silence, comforted in the fact that we were not alone.

At Cooper, I was no longer the only one in my class with a long strange name. Many of my classmates were immigrants or first generation American, like me. Cooper Union was a place where we could celebrate our own and each other's cultures, and every year, we'd put on an annual culture show in the Great Hall. I had the honor of dancing bhangra, and dandia ras on that famous stage, and also participated in a Filipino candle dance and the Chinese fashion show. One of the things I deeply valued about Cooper Union was this diversity. As a *New York Times* article from last November noted, Cooper Union has "a student body that, for an elite college, is unusually diverse, ethnically and economically. Fewer than half of Cooper Union's students are white, and almost two-thirds attended public high schools."

During my sophomore year at Cooper, we finally had enough interest to start a women's tennis team. (Previously the few women tennis players would play on the men's team). With no facilities of our own, we played early morning on the East River, before the courts filled up, and before our classes in differential equations. We had one match that year against Pratt, which we won. Associate Dean Steve Baker, head of athletics, created shirts for us: "Women's

Tennis at Cooper Union, Undefeated since 1859."

I was an officer in our student chapter of Society for Women Engineers. The national organization had its roots in a meeting of female students from various schools at Cooper Union's Green Camp. The Second Convention of the Society was held in Green Camp in 1950. Panels of discussion then included "Open Your Own Door to an Engineering Career" and an address called "Being a Woman as well as an Engineer."

When I graduated Cooper, I received a scholarship for a master's degree program in geotechnical engineering at UC Berkeley. In August 1999, a major earthquake had just devastated Turkey. On my first day of classes, the first thing my professor said was that Turkey smelled "like 40,000 dead people," further noting that "engineers who know that smell do their work a lot differently than those who don't." It was this sense of social responsibility that led me to pursue engineering, but also to leave it from time to time.

My grandfather quit engineering, to pursue social justice, but it was his water engineering skills that led into activism. It was the same for me. Soon after I started my first job in San Francisco as an engineer, I applied to volunteer at a primate sanctuary in Cameroon, but it was my engineering background that caught the sanctuary's interest. At that time, they had to travel 20 miles to the nearest tap to fill up on water. They had unsuccessfully drilled two wells. They asked me "Where is the water table?" Thousands of miles away, I couldn't possibly know, but I asked a series of questions. Where is the nearest river? What is the topography? How deep were the wells that were dug? What soils did they find? What are the seasonal rainfall patterns?

I prepared much like the former Cooper student I was. I interviewed staff and former volunteers about site descriptions. I looked up geology maps of Cameroon in the library. I compiled these correspondences and maps and tidbits in a big white binder. I was not schooled in small-scale survival solutions, so I tried to school myself. I brushed up on groundwater hydrology, rainwater collection and tropical residual soils. I took French lessons with grand plans for fluency but arrived in Cameroon, with only my "What to (not) order in a Paris Café" French and the big white binder.

There were things the binder did not prepare me for. In Cameroon, I was confronted with so many injustices—wealth trickling out of the region on logging trucks and through oil pipelines while children and adults were dying around me. There was a world of disparity that I was trying to reconcile, perhaps like the India my grandfather had hoped to change. There were things engineering alone could not fix. I wondered if my grandfather and his divining rod asked the same question. What if this wasn't enough? My big white binder served as a reminder, a document of what I knew when I discovered what I didn't.

The next few years, I continued to educate myself in global social and environmental issues. A Cooper education freed me from debt, and allowed me the freedom to pursue purpose driven, not profit driven endeavors. I've returned to the Great Hall many times. I've had the pleasure of seeing the late Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai, speak on the intersections of environmental sustainability, democracy and peace, the Indian Environmentalist Vandana Shiva discuss the concept of earth democracy. These were women who incorporated their scientific backgrounds with social justice. Union, to me, was not only about art and science, but about making the connections between the technical, the political and the social. Cooper Union, I realized, provided me with the financial and intellectual freedom to explore these connections long after I had left its halls.





Financial Way Forward

In a Winter 2008 letter to the Cooper community, the then-President announced Cooper had a balanced budget, an endowment of more than \$600 million, and that the capital campaign had reached the \$150 million mark. Cooper proudly advertised the school was financially healthier than ever, and was lauded by the press for its resilience during the 2008 crash.

Future generations of students owe an enormous debt of gratitude to you—alumni and friends who have generously supported our efforts during this critical period—and to our trustees who have worked tirelessly with the administration to develop our underutilized real estate holdings, to restructure our asset management strategy and to capitalize on changing market conditions. —President George Campbell, At Cooper Union, Winter 2008

Now we have a new President and a new story. The details of how we got here remain murky but the gist of his message is clear: Cooper Union has allowed its structural deficit to widen to the point where Cooper will not be able to fulfill its responsibilities if we do not act immediately. He announced that for several years Cooper Union has been living off borrowed money, bubble markets and the proceeds of real estate assets, sold off one by one starting with Green Camp in the 1970s. He wouldn't be the one to close the doors, nor would he continue selling off Cooper's assets to finance its deficit.

For the last fiscal year, ending June 30, 2011, the true structural deficit was \$16.5 million. For such a small institution, that is a huge number. It's nearly 28% of the budget, which was about \$60 million last year. Records reveal that most years have been deficit years going back four decades. The deficit became

very wide in the early '90s, when rents from our real estate assets dropped relative to the cost of operation. —President Jamshed Bharucha, Art in America, Fall 2011

Regrettably, our new President's announcement coincided with the news that Cooper is weighing abandonment of its full scholarship policy in order to open up new revenue streams. As a result, a false dichotomy between financial reality and institutional principles has emerged and been amplified by the mainstream media, leaving people everywhere with the impression that the only solution to Cooper's problems is to charge tuition.

We believe financial health for Cooper is not at odds with sustaining its legacy of free education. Because we do not have access to the full picture, our recommendations at this time are not as detailed as we would like yet. In the meantime, we recommend Cooper consider these first steps:

- + Focus on the \$6 million primary deficit
- + Achieve \$5.6 million in operational savings
- + Generate \$2.1 million in revenue
- + Approach foundations for institutional support
- + Seek more mutually beneficial terms with MetLife once steps have been taken
- + Promote fiscal governance and responsibility
- + Define and agree on "what is so"

President Bharucha has our full support and cooperation in his commitment to a more sustainable financial model for Cooper Union. To that end, we would like to propose here that to consider introducing tuition is to consider selling out Cooper's most precious asset: its ethos of equality and equity. There are alternatives.

In all the different kinds of business in which I have been engaged, it has been my constant endeavor to carry them on in a way that I should owe nobody anything but good will. —Peter Cooper

INITIATIVE ONE: FOCUS ON PRIMARY DEFICIT
Submitted by Tom Synnott

My name is Tom Synnott. I'm the Chief Economist Emeritus of the U.S. Trust, the nation's oldest trust company, incorporated in 1853. Like many of New York City's oldest and most prominent institutions, the Trust has deep and meaningful ties to The Cooper Union. In fact, Peter Cooper was one of its original founders, and I believe the U.S. Trust has continued to prosper over the years by following many of the same principles of debt avoidance and living within one's means that Peter Cooper espoused.

I joined the Trust in 1965. In 1982, I was appointed Chief Economist and Senior Vice President by Daniel Davison, who thought I could be useful in asset liability management, and who incidentally later became a Trustee at Cooper Union. During my tenure we went through two difficult periods of contraction, but never had any of the kinds of problems other financial firms have that you read about in the paper today. Partly I think this is because we were very conservative in our approach to managing our clients' wealth, and didn't take any perceptible degree of risk with their cash.

I remained in that role of Chief Economist until June of 2002 when I retired. Around that time I was invited to join Cooper Union as an adjunct professor, and began teaching EID 374, Business Economics, which I still teach today. Naturally, the financial difficulties at Cooper Union have been on all the students' minds, as well as my own, and we often found ourselves discussing this in the context of the material I was teaching. At the end of last fall's semester, I asked my class if they would be interested in convening for a few extra sessions to discuss ways of improving Cooper Union's financial situation.

They were, and so we met well into December to discuss bridging what appears to be a \$16 million budget deficit: \$10 million in interest payments plus a roughly \$6 million non-interest cash deficit, or "primary deficit." Within my EID 374 class, the following conclusions received unanimous support:

+Cooper Union's full-tuition scholarship policy is an integral element in the identity of the institution and should be preserved at all costs.

+An immediate goal should be to cut the \$6 million primary deficit in half, or to \$3 million.

+It was strongly felt that the \$3 million reduction in the deficit could be achieved by a \$2 million reduction in expenses and a \$1 million increase in revenues.

The students felt this goal could reasonably be achieved and would send a strong signal to alumni, MetLife, and potential foundation donors that The Cooper Union is truly serious about solving its financial problems.

I agree with them. We need to first focus on the \$6 million primary deficit, and should aim to cut it in half as quickly as possible. Once that goal is achieved through expense decreases and revenue increases, Cooper should be able to seek and obtain meaningful support from charitable foundations and grantmakers. Then it makes sense to approach MetLife to talk about restructuring the loan and dealing with the onerous prepayment penalties. A general approach, based on EID 374's conclusions, might look something like this:

A. Save \$2 million in expenses and target \$1 million in revenue for a \$3 million improvement

Charging tuition to close a deficit does not deal with the exponential rise in expenses. We must change that trajectory by first identifying areas where spending is more variable, and begin there. Management and General costs have gone up quite a lot in the last 10 years.

Philanthropic giving will follow savings. After Cooper demonstrates it is serious about addressing the deficit and has done all it can to cut expenses, then we can approach smaller charitable foundations and ask them to help sustain Cooper Union through the next six critical years. If this is not already happening in the Development Office, it's probably a job for the alumni.

Meaningful, low-overhead revenue ideas should be considered too, such as an alumni-led art auction. Or a "Buy a Bulb" fundraising campaign where donors can pay to keep the lights on, literally, by covering building supply expenses or paying part of Cooper's monthly utility bills. Even gestures like a public appeal to Oprah could generate the kind of goodwill Cooper needs right now.

B. Approach larger foundations for institutional support

Once Cooper demonstrates it can work with smaller foundations, support from larger ones will follow. New York City is the foundation capital of the world, with small foundations and large foundations alike, many of which support the kind of special purpose Cooper Union exists to fulfill. If Cooper were able to show it could successfully work with small grantmakers and donors, then it would be in a position to approach a larger institution, the kind that gives on the order of millions, and ask for a multi-year commitment to ensuring the legacy of Peter Cooper.

Then Cooper Union would have dedicated support for some of the programs it is having trouble financing,

enabling it to raise what it can do for talented students to an even higher level. Over the last several years, more Cooper Engineering graduates have chosen to remain at Cooper Union for their Masters Degree. This program could specifically be funded by a foundation. Is a million a year too much to ask for? Probably not.

C. Seek more mutually beneficial terms with MetLife once steps have been taken

MetLife and Cooper Union have both been prominent presences in the City of New York for a century and a half. Maybe one way to approach MetLife is to ask them to step forward for Cooper Union in this time of need. Helping Cooper could do quite a lot for an institution in an industry that is under tremendous scrutiny right now. In turn, MetLife could make all the difference for Cooper Union, now and in the years to come.

"In relation to the building of the Cooper Union, I desired to carry it out as soon as I thought I had the means to accomplish it, if I was compelled to live on bread and water for the remainder of my life." – Peter Cooper

This seems to us to be a sensible approach to tackling Cooper's difficulties. In the meantime though, there exists a general belief that the decision to charge tuition in one form or another has already been made, and this doesn't help with City relations, alumni giving or charitable institutions who are in a position to help Cooper out.

One view some people seem to have is that Cooper Union should look like Harvard but with a quirkier set of students, some of whom would pay tuition and some who wouldn't. But I don't think you want that. The type of student at Cooper Union would change completely, socioeconomically speaking. Another thing worth keeping in mind is, in this day and age when so many colleges and universities are run like big businesses, Cooper Union remains a place where professors have not moved away from teaching. Just the other day I was at the eye doctor, and when I mentioned I was teaching at Cooper Union, he stopped and said, "Now Cooper Union. That's a real educational institution."



—Thomas W. Synnott, adjunct professor, was educated at Williams College, received a PhD in Economics from Yale University in 1961 and served as Chief Economist at the U.S. Trust Corporation from 1982 until 2002. He has taught EID 374, Business Economics, at the Cooper Union since 2003.

INITIATIVE TWO: ACHIEVE AS MUCH AS \$5.6 MILLION ANNUALLY IN OPERATIONAL SAVINGS

The following crowdsourced initiatives should be considered a palette of options. Savings are identified using Form 990s and the consolidated financial statements, and all dollar amounts are adjusted to March 2012.

A. Defer a percentage of administrative compensation until 2018

Beginning with the three highest paid officers, examine administrative compensation and save money through salary deferrals for annual savings of \$460,000.

We may not all remember how lean Cooper once was, but in 1999 the College President made just \$285,000 annually, inclusive of all benefits, and was not provided housing. By 2002 presidential compensation had risen to nearly \$540,000, including housing benefits reported at \$100,000. In that year, the President and his two next-highest compensated officers all together took home \$1.1 million. By 2010, the top three officers were collectively making over \$1.4 million (excluding a \$160,000 retirement bonus for the Treasurer). The President's compensation alone totalled \$705,000 – a 250% increase over 1998 and 1% of the college's overall expenses, earning Cooper Union a mention in a Chronicle of Higher Education article on inflated college president salaries.

Right now the presidential salary is on track to exceed \$1 million by 2018. Is this level of executive compensation appropriate for any nonprofit institution, let alone Cooper Union? We may want to reconsider this trend, especially in light of the fact that Peter Cooper and the founders endowed Cooper Union in order to lift up the poor and working classes, a principle that lives on today in the institution and for which it receives public monies. We also need to ask whether Cooper can afford the packages paid out to other administrative officers now as well.

A long term goal may be to return to the days of more "modest" officer compensation. Yet there are opportunities to save money here now. It may be beneficial to both the Institution and its top three highest-paid officers if they offered to have a percentage of their salaries deferred until 2018, when an extra \$25.5 million of Chrysler revenue is scheduled to kick in. This gesture would generate goodwill within Cooper and its potential supporters, and also help the institution out financially.

This could be implemented immediately. Deferrals of 33% sound like a lot, but during the deferral period the President would still receive over \$475,000 a year and the other two officers would make \$270,000 and \$200,000 inclusive. Meanwhile, that 33% deferral would save \$500,000 annually for Cooper.

B. Replace academic deans with rotating faculty

Allocate administrative responsibilities for each school to Cooper academic faculty members, who will serve as academic deans for 5-year rotations for a savings of \$650,000 per year.

For a student body of just under 1,000, Cooper employs six academic deans. One each for each academic discipline, including the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and one associate dean each for Art and Architecture. In 2010, the annual compensation package for administrative deans ranged between \$240,000 to \$320,000, and has in general doubled since 2000. Altogether, academic deanship compensation totaled just under \$1.5 million in fiscal year 2010.

These administrators' responsibilities, in most cases if not all, can be assumed by academic faculty members. Current academic deans would be restored to teaching faculty positions, while rotating "faculty deans" would be elected for 5-year terms by the respective academic departments in concert with the President's Office. Faculty deans would receive nominal salary increases over the duration of their term, say \$60,000 annually, to reflect the increase in complexity of their position. If necessary, associate deanships could be maintained in the Art and Architecture Schools in a similar manner, electing faculty associate deans with a \$40,000 nominal salary increase.

Replacing academic deans with rotating faculty deans has historical precedence at Cooper Union: for several years in the last decade, the Faculty of Humanities lacked a dedicated academic administrative dean, and that position was temporarily filled by a tenured Humanities Faculty member. Similarly, the Engineering School currently lacks an administrative dean to no apparent disadvantage. The Architecture School, however, would be difficult, however, since there are only two full-time faculty members. Another kind of solution may need to be developed by that school.

Implementing this initiative would generate a total annual savings of at least \$650,000 dollars for FY 13, taking into account salary complexity factors and also the salary of deans restored to teaching faculty. There are also benefits to this beyond financial savings: in theory, this initiative has the potential to bridge institutional gaps between administration and academics, remedying the distance between branches of Cooper's institutional structure. A closer, more colloquial relationship between administration and

academics would help Cooper to better fulfill the overall educational mission of the school.

C. Move out of 30 Cooper Square

Save \$700,000+ annually by relocating services in 30 Cooper to Cooper-owned property.

Despite owning significant floor area in and around Cooper Square, The Cooper Union has leased space in 30 Cooper Square for several years in order to house administrative services such as the Treasurer's Office, Student Services, Admissions and Records, the Financial Aid Office, Development, Alumni Outreach and more. For the 2012 fiscal year, rental payments incurred to the School by this rental property total \$710,231 annually. It is unclear whether this figure includes taxes and utilities, which would be an additional expense.

It may be time to move out. Cooper has been considering this since at least the mid 2000s, and the timing is right: the ten-year commercial lease on this property expires this year, in 2012. Administrative services in this property deemed to be essential to the daily operation of the school can be moved to a nearby Cooper-owned property such as the Foundation Building or the New Academic Building, the Stuyvesant Fish House (21 Stuyvesant - also slated for administrative space in an early version of the last decade's Master Plan), the Residence Hall (29 Third Avenue), or a combination of these properties.

Another alternative space to consider for essential administrative services in 30 Cooper is the new property rising at 51 Astor (the old Engineering building), rumored to be pushing for completion in 2013. This building will primarily house commercial tenants, but also will allocate floor area for academic use. Without knowing the terms of the long-term lease Cooper has signed with Minskoff (the developer) it is difficult to judge how feasible this is.

Moving is always a good opportunity to clean house. Storage items could be sent offsite to a dedicated facility and documents could be electronically archived, reducing floor area requirements. First costs incurred by implementing this initiative consist of moving expenses and new fit-out costs. A conservative estimate would place the first costs at \$1.2 million. Potential loss of rental income incurred by replacing a couple floors of the Residence Hall with offices must be considered too. Still, this initiative seems attractive even if we do not consider future escalations in rent.

On the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of The Cooper Union in 2059, my hope is that institute is thriving, having formed strategic partnerships with those who believe in and have benefited from its academic vision. The asset management strategy for 2013 should thoughtfully consider a \$500 million capital campaign that fosters partnership with a larger, more diversified base of supporters of the academic vision. Furthermore, it should include a campaign of the institution's contributions to New York City as a center of educational excellence and public discourse. Most importantly, it should reaffirm alumni commitment to the academic vision of Peter Cooper.

—Recommendation for a long-term strategy by Jean Marie Cannon, Alumna in Financial Services

With first costs of \$1.2 million over annual savings of \$710,000, this initiative pays for itself in 1.7 years.

Exiting 30 Cooper will save the school a total of at least \$700,000 thereafter and almost certainly much more, savings that could be realized as early as 2015.

D. Minimize noncritical expenses

Realize \$1.9 million in savings annually by minimizing noncritical expenses.

In FY 2010, Cooper paid \$924,000 for all travel and conference and meeting attendance, spent over \$360,000 in "advertising," incurred well over \$3.3 million in "office expenses," and spent \$1 million on "other." Under normal circumstances these expenditures might seem justified, but in a deficit scenario where Cooper is seriously considering reneging on over 150 years of free education, cutting these expense-type costs across the board makes sense. This could entail minimizing travel, reducing advertising costs, and waiting to replace furniture until 2018.

Also certain annual or periodic costs should be open to review, as well as nonessential ongoing work. For example, it may be worth considering stalling implementation of the new Datatel system, which is being installed alongside ongoing institutional operations. Overall costs of Datatel implementation are forecast to cost just under \$3 million. Additionally, at least one of the systems supported by Datatel relies

An Auction for Cooper Union

Upon hearing about the financial crisis at Cooper last October, one of my first thoughts was that an historical auction showcasing the work of Cooper alumni, faculty and staff is something that could and should happen. As someone familiar with philanthropic arts foundations and the trustee/collector sector of the art world, I knew this idea would have the potential to raise significant funds, and could be an elegant way to feature the creative achievements of the school. Knowing an endeavor of this scale doesn't happen overnight, a like-minded group of us immediately began brainstorming to form an actual plan.

We agreed the best format for an historic event-auction should fall somewhere in line between what Ben Stiller did in collaboration with David Zwirner for Haiti and the recently held Waterkeeper Alliance Auction at Matthew Marks Gallery. The former raised about \$13 million while the latter raked in about \$1.2 million. On average we believe we can clear a confident \$1 million for Cooper Union. Our success will be determined by our ability to organize, whether we receive the blessing and cooperation of the school, and also which estates we are able to connect with.

Over the last few months our group has met with several event auction organizers, ranging from Christie's to other high-level fundraising consultants. It became clear that the amount of volunteer groundwork on our end would dictate the out-of-pocket costs. An event like this is usually organized by dedicated professional groups, but in order to minimize overhead, maximize funds raised, and gain crucial supporters during a time when the institution's very mission is being called in to question, we have taken the job on ourselves. We have already been promised participation by a few key artists, designers and estates. Although we may not be at a financial advantage, we—the alumni, staff, faculty and friends who support the tuition-free ideal - do have the commitment, creative resources and art world contacts to turn this idea into reality.

Implicitly, we are aware we will not solve all Cooper's financial problems with this auction. But it's a great start and the right first step. We need to publicly demonstrate our confidence in this world-renowned institution and show we are serious about raising money. Then we can re-engage with charitable foundations and encourage the types of institutional giving that has always made up the bulk of Cooper Union's endowment.

—Adriana Farmiga, A'96, Adjunct Instructor School of Art and programming advisor to La Mama Gallery NY, with Josephine Halvorson, Yuri Masnyj, Leslie Hewitt, The Bruce High Quality Foundation, Will Villalongo, Sam Messer, Lisa Lawley, Amy Westphal, Anthony Titus, Benjamin Degen, Hope Gangloff, Sara and Johannes Vanderbeek and several others who wish to remain anonymous.

on software that must be re-licensed annually for a fee of \$148,000. Software, systems and functions, and perhaps even Datatel itself could all be built and managed in-house; the savings could be significant.

Expenses that are variable in nature can be easier to cut than other kinds of expenses. Since these costs do not directly pertain to the essential function of Cooper Union, which is teaching, they are less painful than other cuts. All together, travel and conferences, advertising, office expenses and "other" cost about \$5.6 million. If we cut these variable expenses by a third, we've saved \$1.9 million.

E. Reduce costs of "Supporting Services"

For an annual savings of at least \$2 million, reduce costs attributable to management activities and general costs.

The number of students enrolled at Cooper Union has not grown significantly since 1996. However, between 1999 and 2011 the headcount of the school rose by 31 new staff positions, and the "Supporting Services" expense category, comprised of "Management and General" and "Fundraising," has increased by at least \$5.5 million. This has been a primary driver of Cooper Union's rising expenses over the last decade. The trend is unsustainable for a school that relies on thrift to survive.

Sometimes you have to go backward to go forward. If we scaled this category back to 2001 levels, Cooper would save almost \$4 million annually. Because the Consolidated Financial Statements are not consistent in their accounting categories from year to year between 2001 and 2011, it's hard to identify another date to which it would be wise to scale. However, it stands to reason that we could reasonably scale the Supporting Services costs back to a \$2 million midpoint they could have theoretically reached in 2006, the year the Master Plan to reduce annual operating expenses failed to go into effect.

Staffing levels should be carefully examined, a "zero growth" model for other administrative costs could be adopted along with a salary freeze, and positions could be consolidated through attrition. In the meantime, perhaps establishing a more direct organizational tie between Supporting Services, the academics, alumni and students could help justify costs, maximize resources and improve the performance of all parties.

Just as alumni giving has, by some measure (but not the Chairman's), not lived up to its fullest potential, the Development Office has historically underperformed as well. If Cooper has as few years left as the President has warned in meetings with alumni, it could be time to cultivate an atypical model for the Development Office, one which involves leveraging the skills, experience and dedication of the Cooper community.

INITIATIVE THREE: GENERATE AS MUCH AS \$2.1 MILLION ANNUALLY IN NEW REVENUE

These initiatives should be considered as a palette of options. Each one of these initiatives by and large encompasses several smaller ideas that came out of community breakout sessions held over the last five months at Cooper.

Savings are identified using Form 990s and the consolidated financial statements, and all dollar amounts are adjusted to March 2012.

A. Reposition Cooper-area real estate assets for \$500,000 annually by 2015

Repositioning Cooper's real estate assets could start yielding a conservatively estimated \$500,000 annually by 2015, if some degree of the following two approaches is implemented:

Raise as much as \$120,000 in FY13 by repurposing 21 Stuyvesant

On Monday, April 16, 2012, the popular website Gothamist reported that Cooper Union was planning to lease its recently completed New Academic Building to NYU-Poly, and that the President would vacate the Stuyvesant Fish house, at 21 Stuyvesant, and move into the college dorms in order to demonstrate he was ready

to accept tough cuts himself.

While Gothamist and many more applauded the President, the story turned out to be a brilliant student prank. Yet, in the time it took for people to realize they'd been "punked," a surprising number of alumni and students expressed their support for the plan, and praised the President for his creativity and devotion to the Cooper Union model of higher education. In Cooper community working-group sessions held over the last several months, leasing out 21 Stuyvesant has been a frequently suggested initiative. It was cited again and again for its ability to generate revenue without forever losing valuable assets, as happened with the sale of Green Camp.

Only since 2001 has Cooper provided its president with housing. There are benefits to providing a presidential residence so close to Cooper Union, particularly for fundraising purposes. However there may be equally compelling reasons for the President to consider abdicating the property. Most students never cross the threshold, and giving the Stuyvesant Fish house over to another purpose, such as housing some of the administrative services in 30 Cooper or even entering into a rental agreement with an external party, could raise needed cash. Also, the gesture would be meaningful in a time when Cooper's historic legacy of equity in education is threatened. As we've already found, it would certainly generate interest in Cooper's case.

In Cooper's 2010 Form 990, the Stuyvesant Fish was listed as a nontaxable benefit worth over \$120,000 today.

Lease dorms out at premium rates and consider leasing out commercial space in the Foundation Building

Some feel that all of part of the first floor of the Foundation Building, which contained shopping arcades until the turn of the 20th Century and now houses the Library, could potentially be given back over to retail space. If it were found that 1500 s.f. of library space could be appropriated for this use, after first costs were paid off, this could potentially generate \$150,000 annually. Perhaps the Cooper community and Library could make a real effort to find a tenant interested in a more collaborative, creative relationship with the school. Some also say the student residence at 29 3rd Avenue is underutilized in the summer, and that the space should be aggressively marketed and filled. Others call for it to be leased out partially or entirely to NYU at a cost premium, or even converted into market-rate apartments.

Pursuing one of both of these options would yield revenue of anywhere between \$240,000 and \$2.8 million annually by 2015, minus renovation costs.

B. Invest social and creative capital of community in innovative ventures

At low- or no-cost, incubate visionary ventures and start-ups with the potential to earn at least \$100,000 for Cooper in the next few years

Peter Cooper was the quintessential innovator. He famously invented Jello and the I-beam, and was a singleminded driver behind the Trans-Atlantic Cable. The Cooper Union itself was a venture: Cooper gathered stakeholders, created a way to meet their needs, raised capital, and our school was born.

Other universities, such as Columbia and MIT, have programs that focus students on utilizing their skills for immediate practical purposes. They have entrepreneurship societies that nurture and utilize this opportunity, and both the students and the schools make huge gains from it. Some fund directly, some provide permissive environments for venture capitalists to access ventures, and some simply make available networking opportunities.

This should happen at Cooper. In fact, it already is: the newly formed Cooper Union Entrepreneurial Society, or CUES, is already beginning to provide resources, forums and other basic incubation needs to students and alumni. While Cooper's research foundation mostly works with patents, which can be expensive and time-consuming, CUES focuses solely on incubation. For each new venture, the founders would work out a contract with the school to have a small percentage ownership of the business, usually in the 5% range, in return for the resources offered. Failed businesses would cost little-to-nothing for the school, but the next Angry Birds would potentially generate a lot of income.

There could be a lot in it for Cooper, financially speaking. For example, Paul Garrin, A'82, already has a running business, "Name.Space" at namespace.com, that has pledged a percentage of referred services to the school and estimates a conservative \$100,000 yield for Cooper in the next few years.

C. Fundraise on the strength of Cooper's social and intellectual vision, targeting \$2 million more annually in FY13

Cooper Union's guiding principle of free education is an unimpeachable cause. As President Clinton mentioned in the Great Hall in 1993, Cooper is "an institution intellectually vigorous with free tuition, the first nondiscrimination policy in American history, and a genuine commitment to social justice." Yet in the last decade Cooper has underperformed on its fundraising targets. Is a new approach needed?

Increase annual philanthropic donations by \$100,000 progressively each year for five years

The Cooper Union owes much of what it is today to a handful of forward-thinking 19th-Century industrialists and philanthropists. Peter Cooper made Cooper Union his life's work, pouring his heart, soul and fortune into his school. His son-in-law Abram Hewitt led a continuous capital campaign on behalf of Cooper's endowment, raising gifts of over \$14 million in today's dollars from Andrew Carnegie, \$6 million from an anonymous donor, and millions more. Their gifts still form the base of our endowment.

Cooper Union was born in circumstances parallel to ours. Today, as then, we are in an age of technological revolution. Wealth is concentrated in the hands of the few, some of whom give on a monumental scale. Peter Cooper established Cooper Union out of frustration and lack of faith with the public school system, a cause to which many of today's Andrew Carnegies are giving hundreds of millions annually. Why not tap into the spirit of the moment, and replicate Hewitt's successful fundraising campaign on behalf of this principle today, here, in the fundraising capital of the world?

Our President has rightly pointed out that major foundations usually don't make major gifts to close a deficit. Maybe another way to approach the problem could be to ask smaller, more specialized foundations for help financing the programs Cooper can't pay for, demonstrating simultaneously that the maximum percentage of money donated will be headed for the classroom. \$100,000 more per year, stepped up to \$500,000 more in five years seems like an ambitious but doable target.

Improve alumni giving rate and increase Annual Fund by \$500,000

In any given year, about 20% of alumni contribute a total of around \$1.5 million to the Annual Fund, an unrestricted pot of money used for everything from toilet paper to debt service. More contribute to other funds.

Though these giving rates aren't "bad" or "failed," as some have suggested, we all know the alumni can do better by Cooper. And they are: according to Cooper, alumni donations to the Annual Fund rose by 53% in the last six months of 2011 to \$892,407, presumably in response to Cooper's crisis.

Cooper will never generate the same kind of money from its alumni as a Princeton or a Dartmouth. We do not offer legacy admissions nor do we have a Big East football team. Unlike these schools, many Cooper students come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and gifts are not possible until years after graduation. Finally, Cooper does not have email addresses for half of all 12,000 living alumni, which precludes asking for gifts.

Yet the last six months of 2011 demonstrated that alumni

want to give. Cooper should engage their goodwill through straightforward, periodic communications apprising them of progress, reminding them every dollar in the Annual Fund is a dollar that stays in the endowment. Many alumni have the sense that Cooper is not interested in two- or low three-figure gifts, a misperception the school should correct. Finally, we should seek to identify any other misperceptions or barriers to alumni giving that may not be immediately apparent, and explore the benefits of keeping alumni involved with the school's activities after graduation.

This initiative is relatively easy to implement: it just involves reaching out. Another \$500,000 per year isn't too much to expect, nor is a goal to find 1,000 "lost" alumni by the end of FY13 through social networking sites. Other initiatives to better educate students on Cooper's culture of philanthropy will complement this, going forward.

Tap into resourcefulness of "creative class" graduates and raise \$1 million annually

Crowdsourced funding. Apps making it easy to donate to Cooper. An auction of creative work, a memorabilia sale, grantwriting workshops for students and alumni by alumni – there's no end to the way Cooper graduates want to help their school raise money right now.

While another school might lament having so many graduates in the "creative class," which earns much less than other economic sectors on average, Cooper has at least two great advantages in its court: 1. Many graduates remain in New York City, which has managed to maintain its identity as both cultural and financial capital; 2. Though many graduates make financial sacrifices for their own creative lives and cannot give, often they are in conversation or have connections with powerful and wealthy people via cultural institutions.

Taking our CUES

Enlightened by a renewed understanding of the history and purpose of our school, in April 2012 we founded the Cooper Union Entrepreneurship Society—or, paying homage to Peter Cooper's famous pool table, "CUES."

The goal of CUES is to involve students and alumni in the larger entrepreneurial community. CUES is modeled after the best practices and success profiles of similar organizations. We've adapted some qualities of groups from MIT, Stanford, and NYU to Cooper Union's unique interdisciplinary nature and are investigating other successful strategies. By staging an ongoing series of networking events and lectures and pitching business plans to investors, the Society has the potential to attract a growing community outside of Cooper Union.

Within our "Incubation" model, CUES administrators allocate a percentage of equity ownership, including patent, trademark, and rights from each new venture- in return for resources- to the school. Failed businesses pose no financial risk to the school while successful ventures serve to establish compounding and recurring revenues that flow into Cooper Union's endowment.

Even at this early stage several ventures are progressing, from an innovative tech business to an educational start-up. Many students have amazed us with highly developed concepts and business models. A long overdue, low or no-cost endeavor, CUES embodies the unique interdisciplinary, intellectual, and social capital that exists among the students, alumni, faculty, and friends of Cooper Union. We will help to sustain the Cooper mission into the future.

—Paul Garrin A'82, Caitlin Everett A'08, Sean Cusack BSE'98
and other members of the Cooper Union Entrepreneurs Society

Already some of these graduates are planning to mount an auction of Cooper-related creative work whose proceeds will go, in one form or another, to the school. Essentially these graduates, with their knowledge of the cultural and philanthropic landscape, are donating free labor and services Cooper would have to hire a consultant to obtain. Equally importantly, they are lending their initiative and can-do attitude to a moment that could easily deteriorate into haplessness and complacency.

The auction of creative work is targeting a \$1 million yield for FY13. The benefits aren't just financial either—it will generate cascading benefits for the reputation of the school. The administration should open up channels for these graduates to raise money, leveraging their wits and unique positioning in New York City's cultural scene.

INITIATIVE FOUR: PROMOTE FISCAL GOVERNANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY Submitted by Sim Blaustein

I'm Sim Blaustein, ME'99. As a venture capitalist investor who's been in startup financing since 1997, I'm deeply familiar with the importance of fiscal governance. Over the last few months I've been meeting with alumni who care deeply about the future of our school and our community. As some of the details of Cooper's deteriorating financial situation have come to light, we have observed several disconcerting issues related to fiscal governance, and want to offer our help and expertise as we look to return Cooper to solvency and financial stability, as well as ensure our future prosperity as a community.

Key Financial Observations

It's impossible to find a consistent, coherent financial

history of Cooper Union that clearly tracks revenues and expenses over time, and it's unclear whether the muddled and inconsistent financial records are due to lack of data, poor recordkeeping or intentional obfuscation.

Also, there do not seem to be any clear historical or current goals around the budget as a function of revenue. Increases in spending over time seem to have occurred without regard for risks associated with both market returns and charitable giving. It is equally unclear whether a system of budget accountability and checks and balances have been in place. For example, it seems that while Cooper has invested an increasing amount in fundraising efforts, both via headcount as well as travel and conferences, these have not produced consistent results in terms of contributions. Based on the data we have seen, it appears that Cooper's expenses have increased far faster than either the rate of inflation or the higher education cost index. It is difficult to match the rapid increases in Cooper's expenses to their causes. Are these increases a function of higher headcount, compensation increases, increased benefits costs, higher overhead expenses, or what? It is unclear why it cost twice as much to educate the same-sized school in 2011 than in 1999.

Outstanding Questions

Is there a clear, coherent summary that includes both

the recent financial history of the school as well as our current operating budget, in a way that delineates between headcount, fixed and overhead costs by department?

What are the main causes of Cooper's increasing in spending?

To what extent is the current situation the result of poor planning, poor execution, or unreasonable expectations in the endowment's income potential? What is the chain of accountability when expenses exceed revenues? Who authorizes these on a year-to-year basis?

What areas can we reduce spending to allow the school as a whole to survive in the near term?

To what extent should a public eye, whether in the open or via a committee of alumni, be involved in monitoring and managing the financial health of the school?

Key Recommendations

The school should have consistent, logical recordkeeping across the departments that tie back to actual areas of expense. For example, payroll- and headcount-related expenses for each department, benefits expenses related to headcount, and facilities costs.

Wherever possible, these expenses should be matched to the key 'inputs'—such as increases in headcount, changes in travel, and the like.

Cooper should retain a moderately priced auditor to provide an independent review of financials on an annual basis. Ideally this firm would report to an audit committee among the trustees and not the president. Understanding the basic limitations and requirements of the school's functioning, we should strive to keep a budget that matches the fixed costs of the school against the sustainable amount of revenue available, while matching variable expenses against variable sources of income.

For example, we should determine on a rolling basis the 'safe' amount of revenue available to Cooper based on predictable sources of income like the Chrysler building, and engineer our fixed cost structure to fit within those limits. The question as to what the sustainable, after-tax income that can be harvested from the endowment is critical but should be analyzed and determined in a highly conservative manner.

As incremental sources of revenue become available, either via excess returns on the endowment, government and corporate grants, or alumni giving, we should determine whether to increase the endowment, make capital improvements, or increase variable expenses like special programs and additional curriculum. Given the limits of our sources of income,

Sam Vernon (A '09)



When I was 18 years old, the possibility of going to the Cooper Union was a dream. I had worked up until that point- from the time when I was very young to the time I was eighteen- taking art classes and attending visual arts programs through middle school and high school. Going to Cooper was the next step in my idea of what I could do to become a successful artist.

There was no way I would be able to go to school without the financial support that Cooper provided. When I graduated from the Cooper Union in 2009 with a BFA, I was the first person in my family- on both my mothers and my fathers side- to complete a four year bachelors program. Knowing that without the support of a full- year scholarship I wouldn't have been able to gain the opportunity to have such a high level of education sincerely means to me that the Cooper Union needs to continue offering that same kind of support to young artists.

Today I am the director of a Public Art program and an emerging artist, but I know there is no way I would be where I am now without the support of the Cooper Union and Peter Cooper's vision.



the school should seek to be as lean and flexible as possible when it comes to operating expenses. Budgets should be set and strictly enforced.



—*Sim Blaustein, ME'99 and CUAA Alumni Council member, is an early stage Venture Capital investor with Bertelsmann's BDMI fund. After spending several years on the operating side in Silicon Valley, he joined his first VC fund in 2003 and since then he has worked on over 50 startup investments. In addition to his BE from Cooper he holds a much more expensive MBA from MIT Sloan School.*

INITIATIVE FIVE: DEFINE AND AGREE ON "WHAT IS SO" Submitted by John Leeper

My name is John Leeper. I'm a construction executive and an '85 graduate of the Cooper architecture school. Cooper was so unlike anything that I saw at any other school that I was determined to be part of it. Those Cooper years were among the best years of my life. It was a privilege to go to Cooper.

The current crisis is symptomatic of a long-term malaise in the culture of the school. That is, not seeing "what is so." In fact, Cooper has not been amenable to criticism in my memory. I remember when I was a student at Cooper, any criticisms of the school were responded to with the refrain, that there are plenty of people who would be glad to have our place in the school. The argumentum ad hominem responses were based on a refusal to see any validity in the criticism. There has been a stubborn, long term, willful turning away from examining the operational reality of Cooper, especially in the everyday world of dollars in and dollars out. This is borne out by President Bharucha's pointing out that Cooper's has operational budget was not balanced for several years and his further assertion that it has not been operationally well run for approximately 40 years. This is inexplicable.

The old unexamined Cooper story can't carry us forward in the world that is rapidly changing in front of us. It is time to reinvent the school through hard and honest conversation. It is time to generate a conversation that produces a clearing that we can all stand together in and carry the school past the present crisis into a sustainable future. That can only occur if we see and agree on the present state of the school.

—*John Leeper is a 1985 graduate of the School of Architecture, and is the Cooper Union Alumni Association 2012 Alumnus of the Year.*



THE TRUTH ABOUT ALUMNI GIVING

True understanding of how many of the alumni donate to Cooper Union is muddled by inconsistent accounting. A recent analysis of funds donated to Cooper, including both the Annual Fund and capital campaign, indicate that alumni were responsible for 44% of money raised. It would appear that alumni giving may be more inconsistent than a projection-based fundraiser would like, but is a significant overall contribution to the school.

Beyond financial contributions, alumni support Cooper Union in a myriad of ways. Through professional successes Cooper Union alumni provide the best sort of advertisement possible. After graduation many former students find themselves entering into a very casual network of alumni who will help professionally as students establish and advance themselves in careers.

More directly, Cooper Union alumni flock back to Cooper Union, supporting the institution through adjunct professorship. The fee paid for a semester adjunct class is a nod to the professionalism of the instructors, but when considering the estimated hourly rates that these adjuncts could charge in their primary professions, the fee should be considered more of an honorarium. Should Cooper Union have to hire adjunct professors from a market which does not heavily consist of engaged and generous alumni, the costs would surely be much higher. The number of adjunct professors who are also alumni is not tracked, nor do alumni receive acknowledgement for this important way they alleviate costs.

Other alumni give back directly to Cooper Union through volunteer activities. Countless and unmeasured hours are spent by alumni on the Alumni Association council and its committees, working to further the mission of Cooper Union through friend- and fund-raising activities. Other Alumni participate directly by volunteering to guest lecture in classes, or to speak to students at events hosted by the Career Center. Some alumni make a point to ask the Alumni Affairs office for contact information of alumni when they travel, and meet up for coffee and Cooper Chat. These hours spent working to advance the Cooper Union are untracked and are another significant yet unaccounted for source of support.



John Emerson (A '95)



I arrived at the Cooper Union excited about art and somewhat politically engaged. When I left, I made the decision not to use politics in my art, but to use art in my politics. And since then, my education at Cooper has enabled me to work at some of the most effective and influential organizations pressing for political and social justice.

When I arrived as a new Cooper student New York City, politics was in the air: war in Iraq, genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia, gentrification and police tactics squeezing the poor, the homeless, and squatters out of the East Village. Political art and critical theory were the order of the day. As a student, I gravitated to studio painting and art history. I nurtured an interest in the social history behind 19th century American landscape painting and from there, I propelled backwards into the Enlightenment and the dawn of modernity, as well as forwards into the turmoil of the 20th century.

One of my Cooper roommates exposed me to the political possibilities of graphic design and when I graduated, a few Cooper friends helped me hook up freelance work. I was able swap between paid corporate work and pro bono work for human rights organizations that interested me.

I turned my back on the gallery system and began my 20-year commitment to producing graphics for non-profit organizations. Since graduation, the majority of my work has been for organizations that promote human rights. I have worked with large organizations like the United Nations, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the Committee to Protect Journalists, as well as small ones like Democracy Now!, United for Peace and Justice, and the Correctional Association of New York.

I feel extraordinarily privileged to be able to work with clients whose mission I believe in. Human Rights Watch, where I worked for 3 years, is also where I met my partner, a senior researcher on human rights in Central Asia. Together we have a beautiful little girl whose brilliance, questions, and observations teach me every day about what it means to be human.

Every day I am grateful for the freedom that my Cooper education has allowed me to experience. Graduating without student debt has given me the confidence and financial security to take risks with my career, and to devote myself and my career to furthering the cause of human rights and social justice.

It's hard to imagine how the life and career path I've followed would have been possible had I not graduated debt-free from Cooper. I think it would have stressed and restricted my decisions both inside and outside of school. It would have influenced by ability to explore and take chances. Once Cooper charges tuition, the institution and the quality of education it provides will be changed forever.

Making an arts education affordable to the less affluent, and making it possible for gifted artists to make art their work is no small contribution. Having graduated from a public high school and taught briefly at a public high school in New York City, I can assure you that raw talent and brilliance are everywhere. I have witnessed amazing things from my students and peers. All it takes is opportunity and a little guidance to unlock it and unleash it upon the world.

Joan Semmel (A '52)



I am the first generation in my family to attend college. My mother was an immigrant from eastern Europe; my father was born here, but caught in the throes of the depression, he never had the opportunity to get more than a high school education. We lived in a tenement neighborhood in the Bronx and were under considerable economic stress.

The economic advantage of going to a tuition free school, especially since my chosen field was fine art- a most impractical choice under the circumstances- was crucial. My family simply could not have managed it otherwise.

Cooper's reputation as one of the best schools in the country in the art field with stringent and competitive admission standards was a challenge. I was thrilled to have been admitted.

With my teachers' help, I began to think of myself as an artist. That self-definition has been the core of my life ever since then. Years later, I would meet with other artists who had also graduated from Cooper Union. There was a bond of shared experience. Who did you study with? Remember Schutz in Design and Marsicano in Painting? We all remembered the time with these mentors as formative. Their dedication to art as a purpose in life and their commitment to us as students was heroic. The contribution of all of these people- those who taught and those who graduated- to the cultural life of this city is immeasurable.

At this time of closing economic horizons, it is instructive to look back on the life of my family, and realize how important educational opportunity is for people at the bottom of the ladder. The additional burden of tuition would have frozen us out.

The possibility for upward mobility for which our country is so famous depends upon the kinds of opportunities that Cooper Union afforded us. This generation of young people needs to have those same educational opportunities if our country is to continue to be the place where people can work hard and succeed regardless of the circumstances of their birth. It was that idea that was at the very foundation of the Cooper Union.



David Gersten (Faculty, Arch '91)



I think we all recognize that our Cooper Union faces an existential crisis.

"I for one, have been blessed with...a moment in education... where I have had...A Social Contract and many of the people sitting today in this audience, have made my life...more understandable, because of their understanding of the Social Contract."

—John Hejduk

It is not that: The Cooper Union holds up free education, but that free education holds up The Cooper Union.

It is not that: we can no longer afford to: freely educate, but that we cannot afford to break the promise of Free Education

The largest single financial asset that the Cooper Union currently holds is its promise of free education: TO ALL. The value contained within this promise far exceeds our current endowment as well as the physical properties held by the institution including the land under the Chrysler Building.

Our challenge and obligation, our social contract, is to comprehend and make more understandable how to mobilize the resources contained within this promise.

Peter Cooper was directly involved in countless inventions. There are three specific inventions that offer direct lessons to the questions we face. When this Foundation Building was constructed it was one of the tallest buildings in New York City. It contained an elevator shaft that waited four years until Elisha Otis invented the 'safety elevator', an elevator containing a mechanism that secured the elevator cab if the cable was cut. This securing mechanism mitigated the risk of injury or loss from collapse and created the credibility necessary for the elevator to be widely used by the public.

The safety elevator removed the vertical barrier of walking above eight stories and the city *exploded* upwards, creating an entirely new geography of human inhabitation. Removing the vertical barrier, mobilized the resources, that fueled the 150-year vertical rise that is: New York City.

Peter Cooper was also directly involved in pulling the Trans-Atlantic Cable between the two continents, compressing weeks into seconds, in the exchange of: information and ideas. The Trans-Atlantic cable removed the communications barrier of shipping speeds and the exchange of ideas *exploded* between the two continents, creating an entirely new geography of human interaction and exchange. Removing the communication barrier mobilized the resources that fueled the 150-year continuous transformation of Global communications.

The massive resources invested in creating each of these transformations were mobilized as a direct result of removing barriers and articulating a credible vision of the consequences of their removal.

Peter Cooper's years of struggle in pulling the Trans-Atlantic cable were overcome by his clarity of vision, that through this connection. "Knowledge shall cover the earth as waters the deep"

Articulating this vision, keeping this promise, required the third invention, I believe, Peter Cooper's greatest invention: the removal of barriers to education. Education is by definition a transformative pursuit, individuals come together and engage in transformative interactions and experiences: Knowledge evolves. Creating circumstances of proximity and interaction among a great multiplicity of ideas and questions, leads to mutual transformation and new forms of knowledge. In creating The Cooper Union, Peter Cooper invested in the profound idea that removing the barriers to education creates a dynamic crucible of free thought where a great diversity of people and their questions can interact and co-evolve, developing new linkages, new thought processes and new questions. Peter Cooper understood that the barriers to education were not only unjust to those that they excluded, but those barriers impoverished the internal life of an institution. Barring any segment of the population creates a diminished geography of human knowledge and experience within the educational community.

Like the vertical barrier removed by the safety elevator, the

invention of The Cooper Union, removed the artificial age limit above which people could freely participate in the transformative interactions of education. Like the Trans-Atlantic cable, the removal of the financial barriers to education collapsed the distances within the vast and uneven geographies of resource distribution and accumulation, bringing into direct proximity those who would otherwise have an ocean between them. Removing the barriers to education creates an entirely new geography of human: proximity, interaction and transformation, a new geography of knowledge and imagination. The value and meaning of the Trans-Atlantic cable and the global communications revolution that it unleashed is found in the exchange of: knowledge and ideas that pass through it. The Cooper Union is Peter Cooper's greatest transformative invention, because it creates transformation itself. It is the invention that sustains invention and contributes to the continuously expanding universe of knowledge that elevates mankind.

There are many forms of interaction where the introduction of a financial barrier to participation dramatically alters the meaning of the interaction. I would offer the example of participatory democracy. While the process of participatory democracy requires the mobilization of vast resources, gathered together from all of the participants, requiring an individual fee to participate in voting would alter the meaning of the process, to such an extent, that it would collapse the value of participation, it would no longer be participatory democracy.

In fact, the ultimate safety device, the mechanism that secures individual agency and gives credibility to all forms of collective judgment is the: Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Each and every Right guaranteed by this United Nations declaration requires the mobilization of resources. These rights are of such fundamental value to mankind that the burden of these resources must be borne by US ALL. Assigning an individual fee to those who are the supposed beneficiaries of these rights is to collapse the value of all of our rights. I imagine this principle was in mind when crafting: Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Article that designates education as a Human Right and specifically says: "higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit." They must have been quoting Peter Cooper.

This institution is a shining demonstration of the transformative powers of removing the barriers to education. We have been pulling this cable for 150 years and now we face the risk that we are out of resources, that our debt load is too heavy and the only way to keep moving forward, may be to "cut the cable" and introduce the barrier of tuition. This would not be moving forward at all, this would be a collapse in the value of the entire endeavor. For, in this journey, there is no other shore to reach; we are pulling the continuously expanding geographies of knowledge and imagination. The distance traveled creates the geography itself as we continue to move forward. Cutting the cable is not the solution; we must invent and construct the safety mechanisms that secure the continuous evolution of knowledge without barriers. We must articulate a credible vision of the value and consequences of removing the barriers to education, and this *will* mobilize the resources to continue the journey. As a way-finder at sea, uses the force of the storm to out-run the storm we must keep the promise of free education to all, in order to secure the many promises of free education to all.

In moments of existential crisis, time has a tendency to collapse, whole chains of events that may usually require years and decades to unfold, suddenly happen overnight. If we can get this right, if we can articulate a model that secures the credible promise of education without barriers, the transformative consequences will far exceed those of the 'safety elevator' and the Trans-Atlantic cable. We will have shifted the trajectory, unleashing new geographies of knowledge beyond our wildest imaginations.

There is a city to be built rising above the geography of our current models of education, a city built upon the many promises of education without barriers. A new city elevating mankind through the transformative forces of: Knowledge, Imagination and Ideas.



Sebastien Tilmans (CE '07)



I grew up in an affluent suburb, in a high-achieving public high school. Like many of my classmates, I worked hard to rise to an aggressive set of ambitions. I had a 4.0 GPA, I had five 5's on AP exams by September of senior year, I was the captain of the swim team, I was the VP of the debate team. I wanted to be a top-notch architect, and I felt it was best to learn structural engineering first. Unlike most of my classmates, I was unimpressed with the Ivy League, MIT, and other big-name schools that seemed to charge undergraduates a fortune for a fancy diploma and the opportunity to struggle to pull a professor away from research. I wanted a school where professors were interested in teaching and in building things, and I wanted to be able to pay for graduate school when I got out. I sent applications to the best public university engineering programs, and I focused on Cooper Union.

I knew about Cooper because Gabriel Abrantes had gone there. Gabriel was fun, he was unconventional, and he was the best artist I had ever known. It was obvious that Cooper was a school for the brightest students, and I had heard from Gabriel that it was free.

Cooper Union was intimidating. I walked into the Great Hall for the open house, and the dismissive confidence I felt toward every other college on the planet vanished between those awesome columns. I felt immediately that this space was extraordinary. Here was a school that defied the way higher education is done, and excelled. It radiated a sense of rebellious genius that was beautiful, inspiring, and just a little bit crazy. I was terrified, but excited enough that I actually enjoyed pouring my heart into my application essays.

I came to Cooper confident that I had earned my spot, and that I would be surrounded by the most amazing people I would meet. I was right. My classmates came from all over the world, from every background. My girlfriend was the first person in her family to attend college. One of my roommates was from a low-income community in Florida, another from an ultra-wealthy family in Lebanon. We were from such completely different places, and yet we were all peers, because we were there. No one got a shoe-in or a hand up to attend Cooper. We had all earned our keep, and that assurance reverberated through all our interactions.

Cooper nurtured me into the person I am today. A class called "Water in the City," alerted me to the challenges our world faces in water and sanitation, but also the beauty and potential of new, unconventional solutions. I worked with art and architecture students to design a rainwater harvesting system for the Children's Garden at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden. I took a job with the class' professor, Franco Montalto (CE' 95), and helped lead a participatory planning process in Red Hook for a community farm. I leveraged engineering to accomplish so much more than build buildings or design pumps and runways- I used it to help change the way society works, to turn wastes and problems into assets that people can wield to improve their livelihoods. It's a style of environmental engineering that I found at Cooper, and I'm making a career out of it.

Cooper gave me the tools to excel in my career. I learned to write and edit at the writing center with Gwen Hyman and Peter Buckley. The

exercise helped me earn a Fulbright Scholarship to build wastewater treatment systems in Panama. I obtained two other scholarships that fund my PhD studies at Stanford. Here I spend my days hammering toward the world that should exist. There are over 2 billion people without basic sanitation on this planet, and a billion without basic access to water. There are more than a billion people living in urban slums, and that number is growing. With my roommate, I convinced the Gates Foundation to fund our idea to reinvent sanitation services in Haitian slums. I'm writing this letter at midnight from a rooftop in Port-au-Prince.

At Cooper, we often heard Peter Cooper's mandate that education should be as "Free as Air and Water." It's a beautiful and powerful vision, but in my profession I feel the challenges in this aspiration. Water may be free, but someone has to pay for the pipes that convey it. Knowledge may be free with an internet connection, but someone has to keep the lights on in the building. At Stanford, students pay for the privilege of learning. At Cooper, I simply cherished the privilege or learning. Education is an investment. At most institutions in the US, the student makes the investment, and should rightly expect the yields of that investment to accrue to him or her. At Cooper, society invests in the student. I work every day to compound the returns on the bet society placed on me.

I love Cooper Union. I learned so much there- in classrooms with professors, in student council meetings with administrators, on the tennis courts with Dean Baker and my teammates, and in so many places with my amazing classmates- I can't imagine a place on earth that could provide as great an education as Cooper does. And yet, I know that I wouldn't have attended without the full tuition scholarship. Even with that scholarship, Cooper Union was the most expensive college I considered attending. I had full scholarship offers at other great schools, and I know many of my Cooper classmates did too. Cooper Union can't be just another big-name school with tuition. I went to Cooper because it offers a stellar, affordable education, and because of that thrill I felt when I sat in the Great Hall. I went to Cooper because it is unique, unique because of the community of stellar peers it nurtures through its blanket full-tuition merit scholarship.



Josephine Halvorson (A '03)



It was probably Day Gleeson's voice. I wouldn't have recognized it then because I was still in high school. I know that it was winter because it was dark outside yet not too late in the day. My mother and I were headed somewhere and she was already in the car. I was just about to run out the basement door when the phone rang. Ours was one of those old rotary phones, red, with a long cord. When I was told I'd been admitted to Cooper Union I stretched the phone as far as I could, out the door, and screamed to tell my mom the good news.

Cooper was the only art school I'd applied to because others lacked the resources to help students who didn't have much money for college like myself. I also wasn't sure that I was ready to commit to being an artist. It seems strange now because it's getting more difficult to picture doing anything else. At the time there were so many question marks about what the future held. Cooper's course catalog, filled with bare-bones course descriptions, credit limits, and no photos, did little to reveal what to expect.

The biggest shock when I started Cooper was how much I had in common with my classmates. For the first (and perhaps only) time in my life, I really fit in. It wasn't entirely about a shared interest in art, or even a personality match. I think it had more to do with a feeling of equality. We had all applied to the best of our abilities, been accepted based on our potential, and were given the shared gift of a free education. As students we were also investing in Cooper, an institution that didn't promise the amenities of larger, wealthier schools.

My education was rich and rugged. I was challenged by an overwhelming wave of new ideas, my own developing sense of self, and a greater awareness of the world around me. At the beginning of my junior year two planes took down the World Trade Center. I watched this from my Brooklyn roof with my boyfriend at the time, also a student at Cooper. Like everyone else it tore us apart to see the cloud of horror descend on the city. When Cooper reopened two weeks later, I felt as if I'd come home. I distinctly remember the collective spirit of resilience, which I still feel today.

Since graduating, I've spent two years in Europe, attended graduate school, exhibited my work, and taught at over a dozen schools, including Cooper. Even with all my other experiences, The Cooper Union continues to shape my identity, as both a person and an artist. I'm forever inspired by my friends, teachers, and students. And the early affirmation that I was worthy of Cooper's generosity has widened my own sense of purpose.



Curtis Wayne (Arch '75)



It never occurred to me that I wouldn't go to college, though my parents had no plans as to how we might pay for it. It was assumed that there would be scholarships - and indeed, there were plenty of scholarships offered me. From Cornell - where I stood to not only go to college free of any charge, but have a little pocket change left over. From Yale - where, in addition to having a totally swell education, I might even be tapped to join a Secret Society.

And then there was Cooper. From my guidance counselor through my teachers - all insisted that Cooper was unattainable.

On a rainy February morning both my parents and I arrived in the dim, filthy nastiness that was Astor Place, to have a look around Cooper's architecture studios. The Foundation Building smelled of wax and turpentine. The hundred-year old pine floors creaked underfoot. Overhead were frightening assemblies of bolts and gusset plates, girders entangled in cephalopod matings with cast iron columns - all painted in flat, art gallery white. But on the walls of the long hallway between the giant open studio and the rooms that overlooked Third Avenue were mounted the most exquisite black-ink-on-glossy(!) Strathmore board architectural drawings of a stadium. Such precision I had never before seen in any drawing. A passing student informed me that this was the thesis project of a fifth year student.

There was no way in heaven I could ever achieve such perfection. Mind you - I'd been taught mechanical drawing since freshman year in high school. But this was a different universe. I was, quite simply, terrified. And prepared myself to not be accepted.

But here I need to jump ahead some thirty months to my second year at as a student Cooper.

We were taught, as we studied John Stuart Mill on Liberty, and Jeremy Bentham on Social Utility, and of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Noble Savage, that Social Contract is underlain by unspoken, commonly held values. That laws are only necessary when unspoken bonds are broken by betrayal of the Contract. And that laws are never have the Social Utility of Social Contract. This connection of disparate thoughts I find most compelling days of late - but I digress:

Nobody ever told me what Cooper was Really About. But! in second year there was a wise and kind upperclassman who confided to me that at Cooper one could do pretty much whatever one wanted, provided it was understood that apparent laxity was really the provision of rope with which to hang oneself. "You had better produce! Then do it better tomorrow," she said. And - really - that IS it:

We produce. Then do it better tomorrow. Not because it is expected of us - but because we expect it of ourselves. That is how we have been both formed by our Cooper experience. There was both Social Utility and Social Contract at work, unspoken yet solidly understood.

Back to the time before: when the slim letter in the pristine white envelope, printed in red upon its upper left corner declaring its origin as *The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art* arrived, and inviting me to join the Class of 1975, I was not surprised. I was beyond surprised, straight into astonishment. And terror.

My terror was not misplaced. My first year teachers were merciless. But in their exactitude there was one characteristic I now carry on in my mentoring of future architects in my studio. When our teachers spoke with us, it was not "to" us, but rather with us. As equals, they a bit ahead in their studies, but with the unspoken understanding - the unwritten social contract - that we would arrive at the place at which they had arrived - and like them, move forward in our understanding, and in our mastery.

We learn, we pass our learning forward, we kick it up a notch every day. Because that is the Cooper way. To live any other way would be to dishonor the gift of our *Free Education*.

This: is the story of Cooper and me.



Community Way Forward

Cooper Union is both a concrete place and an abstract idea. It harbors the concept of union as well as provides a vital forum for its enactment.

When Cooper Union was founded in 1859, the country was on the brink of Civil War. In his unpublished memoir, Peter Cooper writes about his grand vision for the school at this time:

“So deeply impressed was I with that terrible fear of that approaching revolution that I placed on the front of the Cooper Union the single solitary word “Union,” and on the other end I placed the words of “Science and Art,” having a determination in my own mind, if I ever lived to finish the building, I would invite all the Governors of the Southern States and all the Governors of the Northern states to meet me here in New York and dedicate that building to Union.”

To Peter Cooper, the “Union” in Cooper Union represented his hopes for a united country, the union of science and art, the union of public and private, and the union of wage earners and employers. The new, fledgling and existing initiatives outlined in this section expand and honor this sense of union, strengthening bonds between Cooper Union and the larger community.

Maintaining, restoring and building Cooper Union’s societal ties is essential for any financial solution to be sustainable.

Initiative One: Be a Good Neighbor Sustain St. Mark’s Bookshop

Cooper may order its textbooks from another bookstore, but St. Mark’s Bookshop has long been the unofficial bookstore and secret love affair for Cooper Union

students. By partnering with St. Mark’s Bookshop, Cooper Union will look out for its own interests while it helps keep a cherished neighborhood fixture afloat.

We should support the bookstore that supports us. This is a no-brainer: Cooper should take its business to St. Mark’s Bookshop by making it the default destination for its textbooks. But partnership can mean much more than that. Cooper and its students can host St. Mark’s Bookshop readings and book launches in the Rose Auditorium or in the Great Hall, and St. Mark’s Bookshop can showcase Cooper student work and publications in its windows and on its shelves.

Partnering with St. Mark’s Bookshops comes at little to no cost for Cooper Union, makes Cooper Union a better neighbor, and helps keep the distinct character of the community intact.

Envision the Future of Public Space: Reconstruction of Astor Place-Cooper Square

Every year, classes in the three schools look at ways to improve public space at and around Cooper Union. The city itself-- and how each discipline transforms it--is part and parcel of a Cooper Union education. Now, The City of New York is in the final design stage for a large-scale reconstruction of Astor Place and Cooper Square, which will create a pedestrian plaza-- not unlike Union Square-- just outside of the Foundation Building.

While the project is anticipated to start construction in Spring of 2012, and it is too late for significant input for the design, the use of the future plaza is a blank slate. Cooper Union should actively engage its communities of faculty, students and alumni on how to best use this space. Open forums should initiate conversation

within the community on the possibilities of temporary and long-term programming. The administration should disseminate who Cooper Union's point person for this project is, assess the timeline and status of Cooper Union's current involvement, and envision plans for engaging the plaza. Because the Astor-Cooper reconstruction is a pilot "green infrastructure" project whose planted areas are designed to manage stormwater, there may be opportunities for those in the school interested in sustainable design.

Planning can begin now and programs can take place before construction is even finished. Within a year, Cooper should aim to develop proposals for temporary interventions and act to make them a reality, such as obtaining street festival permits for the 2013 End of Year Show. Temporary programming will provide the opportunity to promote collaboration between Cooper Union and its neighbors, as interventions can be the product of work between disciplines and organizations to nurture artistic innovation in the area and expand the varied audiences to the Institution.

Fulfill Peter Cooper's Last Wish:
Launch the Associates of Cooper Union

The original charter for Cooper Union called for the establishment of the Associates of Cooper Union For the Advancement of Science and Art, whose general purpose is outlined below:

"The objects and purposes of which shall be the encouragement of Science, Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce ; the bestowal of rewards for such productions, inventions, and improvements as tend to the useful employment of the poor, the increase of trade, and the riches and honor of the country ; for meritorious works in the various departments of the fine arts ; for discoveries, inventions, and improvements ; and generally by lectures, papers, and discussions thereon, and other suitable means to assist in the advancement, development, and practical application of every department of science in connection with the arts, manufactures, and commerce of the country."

The Associates would be a recognized body that would have a formal channel of making recommendations to the Cooper Union Board of Trustees. The original charter also outlined certain opportunities of the Society of Associates for removing and filling Board of Trustees seats. The Associates would help promote, implement, and undertake initiatives of fundraising and community building for Cooper Union. The membership of the Associates would be broad, thus

The membership of the Associates would be broad, thus expanding Cooper Union stakeholders beyond alumni to also include professional societies, community organizations, civic and governmental agencies, members of the press, and other individuals who in turn would foster the goals of diffusing knowledge, promoting union, and working toward the betterment of society.

expanding Cooper Union stakeholders beyond alumni to also include professional societies, community organizations, civic and governmental agencies, members of the press, and other individuals who in turn would foster the goals of diffusing knowledge, promoting union, and working toward the betterment of society.

As written on his gravestone, Peter Cooper was a man of "Far Sighted Benevolence." Now seems as appropriate as ever for fulfilling his last remaining wish for The Cooper Union.

Initiative Two: Growing Down

In order to preserve Peter Cooper's mission of creating a truly accessible school, The Cooper Union must continue to grow down as well as up. Growing down is an opportunity to nurture young minds in the arts and sciences, offer the art classes that are sadly lacking in many public schools, encourage young women to pursue science, technology, engineering and math careers, and foster a hands on approach to learning. Cooper Union can cultivate students who may not have access or means to such support. Growing Down demonstrates that an investment in a Cooper student's education is a larger investment in New York City's youth.

These initiatives continue Peter Cooper's vision of service to public good, Cooper Union's legacy of support for ambitious young men and women, as well as current Mayoral objectives toward making New York City the next tech/science hub. Most Cooper Union students and alumni will attest that the strength of Cooper Union lies in its students and the culture of collaboration that forms: how students share, teach and learn from each other. Growing down will help spread and promote this culture to the younger levels of education.

There are a number of existing and new efforts towards growing our roots outlined on the following pages.

Launch Cooper Union Volunteer Tutoring Initiative

The Cooper Union Volunteer Tutoring Initiative is a recently formed student-run group that aims to tutor local students in the arts and sciences. The group would provide free (or suggested donations) weekly walk-in tutoring sessions to public school children on

Cooper Union's campus, and work toward establishing links with other schools or after-school organizations and send volunteers to tutor students at those locations. The program would also be a model for growing down, empowering the students in these schools to implement their own tutoring initiatives. The intangible benefits include the positive public relations and goodwill induced by this effort, along with the furthering of Peter Cooper's educational goals. The tangible benefits would include any potential revenue that this brings in (from the suggested donations) in addition to any grants or large gifts that may be obtained as a result of the effort.

Support the Outreach/ Saturday Programs of the School of Art

The Outreach and Saturday Programs within the School of Art serve as a vital link between the college and the local community. These programs provide high-quality art and writing classes to deserving NYC high school students free of charge. In the Outreach Program, Cooper Union professors, staff, and alumni teach classes in fields such as printmaking, design, poetry, and contemporary art issues. The program additionally employs current Cooper Union students as teaching assistants, giving these students an opportunity to teach alongside seasoned educators and to interact with a broader community. The Saturday Program employs current Cooper Union students as lead teachers in courses on drawing, painting, and sculpture, and is entirely run by Cooper Union alumni. Both programs aid young people in creating competitive portfolios and help them gain acceptance to prestigious art colleges around the country. In their success at empowering and educating young people from all backgrounds, the Outreach and Saturday Programs embody the principles of Peter Cooper.

Both of these programs are already vibrant and successful, but require continued assistance. They raise a substantial portion of their funding from outside donors, but their annual Cooper Union contribution has been eliminated. In this time of fiscal contraction, the college needs to affirm its priorities. Cooper Union receives so much from New York City- financially, culturally, and professionally. These programs are one powerful service Cooper Union gives the city in return.

Cooper Union saves a tiny fraction of its budget by eliminating its annual donation to the Outreach and Saturday Programs, but in doing so it sacrifices a truly meaningful link between the Cooper Union, the City of New York, and Peter Cooper's original vision. We should explore ways to restore support to these programs.

Dissolving Barriers between Students and Alumni: Cultivate Cooper Union Mentorship

What is it like to be a practicing artist, architect or engineer? What other fields can Cooper students pursue with their degree? Many Cooper Union students seek exposure to professionals and guidance regarding life after college and many Cooper Union alumni have expressed great interest in mentoring students and sharing their insights into the 'real world.' Despite the great interest, in the past there have been a number of barriers, which have limited the exposure students and alumni had to each other. There are, however, numerous creative ways, formal and informal, to introduce students to alumni and help build relationships.

Cooper Union saves a tiny fraction of its budget by eliminating its annual donation to the Outreach and Saturday Programs, but in doing so it sacrifices a truly meaningful link between the Cooper Union, the City of New York, and Peter Cooper's original vision.

Mentorship may take the form of a semester long apprenticeship or a "Bring a Cooper Student to Work Day." There are possibilities for students and alumni to collaborate on a design project or competition. Cooper Union in its early years was influenced by the polytechnical schools of Europe, but introduced a practical hands-on component to education. Mentorship would contribute to that educational experience.

Students and alumni both share a curiosity about the world and a desire to develop their skills to their full potential. Mentors would share knowledge gained from life experiences and mentees would better understand the opportunities and possibilities available to them and what is required to pursue them. This would be a low cost initiative as many alumni would volunteer to participate. Fostering Mentorship would be a means to keep alumni engaged with the school and build and sustain our Cooper Union community long after graduation.

Growing a Global Community: Engineering for the Middle of Nowhere

This current initiative demonstrates the best in The Cooper Union's ability to extend its values and expertise outward to build better communities within and beyond the institution.

Professor Toby Cumberbatch, Cooper Union students, and The Center for Sustainable Engineering, Architecture and Art – Materials, Manufacturing and Minimalism (SEA2M3) have been working towards solutions to problems that threaten our global commons. The challenges we face as a global community include food, water, energy security, climate change, and the

growing disparity of wealth. With their knowledge of the arts and sciences and a deepening understanding of the world, its peoples and cultures, Cooper students work to create and collaborate on designs suited to, and in harmony with their place of use. Students have worked on solar lighting (Socialite), water filtration, refugee shelters and other projects for applications in Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Ghana, India, and elsewhere in the developing world. Professor Cumberbatch refers to this as Engineering for the Middle of Nowhere.

It is more relevant than ever to continue this work and have an institution like The Cooper Union, dedicated to art and science, committed to equity and the public good, engaged in these challenges and working to preserve our planet's future and, in many ways, the future of humankind.

Toby Cumberbatch (Faculty)



As we came in to land at JFK in June 1971, the stewardess told me that New York City wasn't really America. She suggested I get out as soon as possible and see the real United States. I took her advice. Had someone proposed that twenty-three years later I'd be back in the city for good, doing a job I wouldn't trade for the world, I would have suggested they replace their crystal ball.

The first time I walked into 51 Astor Place I felt completely at home-I cannot explain why. Perhaps it was the unpretentious nature of the students, perhaps it was the professor who told me he'd been there for a hundred years, that his commute sucked but the students were wonderful. I was offered a job but turned it down-moving from Cambridge, England to New York City wasn't an attractive option. I went to Maine but my luck held and a few years later another position arose at The Cooper Union-I accepted without a second's hesitation. For some years I have been taking Cooper students to Africa. When there I am often asked what I do, and I reply that I teach at a small school in New York City. Pressed for a name I'll mention The Cooper Union with the almost certain knowledge that my inquirer will be none the wiser. After all, why would someone in Bujumbura or Ouagadougou know of The Cooper Union? Their disappointment is often tangible as they realize they're not talking to a professor from MIT or Princeton or Harvard.

But I'm itching to tell them just how privileged I am to teach at Cooper; how fortunate Cooper is to attract extraordinary students who, in some mysterious way, have each found Astor Place and arrive after their own unique journey. I want to tell them all the incredible stories these students have to tell-stories that make you gasp in disbelief at how someone so young can have encountered such incredible challenges-and overcome them-like the kid who spent five years fleeing through the Mexican wilderness, or the one who lived on the streets of Los Angeles with his single mother. I want to tell them what it's like to have those very students standing in front of you, asking you what they should do-when you should be asking them what to do. I want to tell them how courteous these same kids are, how they complete assignments on time-and how they will rise to just about any challenge and give their all without question.

Yet I remain silent. It would take too long to explain how our students work together, how the top of the class helps the bottom of the class. How would I describe that Thursday morning I came into the lab to witness the students who had finished their VLSI layout helping the students who hadn't? They had all been up for at least 36 hours and could barely keep their eyes open. I went to my office, sat down and cried. Our students ask us-the professors-the critical questions that make us who we are. These are the questions you really have to think

INITIATIVE THREE: FIX THE COOPER UNION ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

"The day will come, when they, these graduates, will rally around this institution, and, if the plans I have formed can be executed in no other way, they will see that my plans are executed." - Peter Cooper

Where are we now?

At present, the alumni of The Cooper Union are uniquely positioned to affect positive change at the institution. This community includes entrepreneurs, financiers and philanthropists, as well as household-name artists, architects, engineers and inventors. In addition, alumni hold positions of tremendous power within the college, including on the Board of Trustees, faculty, and administration. Alumni are not the

about-the questions that seek out those little grey areas that aren't quite as clear as they should be. A word of caution-only answer when you have a crystal clear explanation-one that inevitably answers a thousand other nagging little questions that have plagued you over the years-else the response from a Cooper student is that telling expression "Professor, you don't understand that as well as you should, do you?" conveyed, as always, with a twinkle in the eye.

The Cooper community is small enough that we can just about bypass all the obstacles thrown up by administrators. You really can instigate just about anything you want to do! For a professor that means unparalleled freedom-couple that with adventurous students and you're in the African bush watching a young lady from your first year engineering class balance 80 lbs of wood on her head whilst the local market women roll around in fits of laughter. You're witnessing these same students gain the respect of the poorest people on the planet, gaining their confidence to help our research.

We're luckier still-some students never quite leave. They turn up on the steps saying they have some free time and would like to work in your lab. You explain that you have nothing to pay them with-they smile-it's the answer they expected. You ask how long they're going to be around-a few weeks they reply. Months later you wonder how you ever survived without them-cohorts of undergraduates move through the lab-each gaining a unique experience, only possible through the unbound generosity of your former student-the student who finally moves on after a couple of years-having made a priceless donation to the school-their time and the transfer of knowledge.

The perfect union-students and professors working together as peers learning from each other in true intellectual exploration-no worries about tuition fees or irate parents. The outcome-standing with a group of your students looking at something created-you forget all the ups and the downs, the stupid politics and the commute-those big broad smiles say it all. Can this happen elsewhere? Sure, but somehow in the setting of The Cooper Union watching students working together with minimal resources-each using their wits, their knowledge and their innate ability to solve a problem-all enveloped within a raw determination to succeed makes it ... well, different.



“problem,” as has been suggested, but they do carry a significant potential to be part of the solution.

The issue at hand is representation. The Association leadership has largely been absent from the dialogue even though alumni and students have demonstrated a desire to be engaged with the school and with the decision-making process. In the five months since the President announced his administration was considering charging tuition, events, assemblies, websites, blogs and facebook pages-- nearly every aspect of the community-wide discussion-- have all occurred outside the purview of the Association.

Despite this, the Alumni Association remains a powerful medium by which the alumni community can legitimately accomplish the changes it wishes to see. It is the only recognized mechanism of advocacy of the alumni body as a whole. It is the bearer of the non-profit status for alumni to raise funds. And it is relevant because its structure of governance extends as high as fully recognized seats within the Board of Trustees and maintains a mandate from the voting alumni community.

A strong argument has been made for a new, independent Alumni Association. But such an organization would need to work to utilize the infrastructure won by previous generations of alumni. In the effort to preserve the mission of the school, independence should be considered a real-- but last-- resort.

One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors.” –Plato

Still, the question now is not if the Alumni Association will change, but how. Already, the Administration and Board of Trustees have taken steps to reorganize how the Administration relates to Alumni. The Office of Alumni Relations has changed from being directly in line to the president in the 1970s and '80s, to being placed under the Vice President of External Affairs, and most recently under the Vice President of Development. Each permutation reflects the priority of the administration in regards to alumni. In comparison, the Association has had no structural change due to its own strong constitution which is based on a memorandum of agreement and requires a vote of the full alumni body to ratify any change.

In its current state, the Association leadership acts as if tied to the hip of the Administration and moving forward, the Association will need to track towards greater participatory government. But to make a difference, change must come from the top and bottom. Alumni who have expressed interest in volunteering must retake the reins of the Association

in order for the collective alumni voice to be heard by the school's Administration. In this joint way forward, the Association can recover from its lethargy, respond to the financial challenges of the college, and again act to represent the will of the alumni body.

Recommendations

In order to be a relevant, vibrant and effective advocate for alumni, the Alumni Association should act to move towards transparency, decentralization and accountability.

Perhaps the easiest change to enact is greater transparency. The actions of the Association should not

In order to be a relevant, vibrant and effective advocate for alumni, the Alumni Association should act to move towards transparency, decentralization and accountability.

be a mystery to those it is intended to represent. Annual reporting on budget, fundraising, and participation rates for its events, as well as minutes, should be made easily available to the membership. As stakeholders in any organization, timely and accurate reporting are paramount to constructive feedback and support from stakeholders.

In order to encourage fresh thinking and innovative programming, the Alumni Association should decentralize its Executive Committee activities and decision-making to include communities outside of the New York City Region. Constituents outside of New York can become a more vital part of the association beyond simply sending a check during annual fundraising phonathons. The Association currently has a Florida Chapter for the active community in residence, but the chapter is not connected to the governance and decisionmaking that is housed in New York City. By including communities in cities such as Chicago, Los Angeles, Tel Aviv and London who have an interest in participating, the Association will widen the reach of the association and create new channels for the development of leadership.

Accountability is a more long term goal that requires reform of both the membership of the Association as well as its leadership.

First, the false barrier between alumni and students needs to be removed. This will help mitigate the large numbers of young alumni who the institution loses contact with due to lack of current contact

information and lack of engagement opportunities. Students should be able to participate as active officers of the association. Per the definition of membership, matriculated students with one year in good standing are automatically considered full members of the Association. Bringing students into the Council, and engaging them as stakeholders instead of observers, enables the Association to better liaison with the academic and operational issues of the school. Students

are no longer future constituents. Students are now constituents.

Second, and in line with the need for increased transparency, Council Meeting must be made open to the membership. Beyond meeting minutes and annual reports, an alumni or student should be able to attend any meeting associated with Council business, including subcommittees. The Council should make

Executive Committee Reorganization:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p><u>Alumni Elected Representatives to the Board of Trustees</u> - 4 members nominated by the Nominating Committee, elected by the alumni via ballot</p> | <p><u>Alumni Appointed Representatives to the Board of Trustees</u> - 4 candidates appointed by the Secretary</p> |
| <p><u>President of the Alumni Association</u> - Nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Alumni Body via ballot. This person sits on the Board of Trustees as a non-voting member</p> | <p><u>Alumni Appointed Representative to the Board of Trustees</u> - Candidate appointed to the Board of the Executive Committee as the Fifth Alumni Representative Board Member</p> |
| <p><u>Secretary/Treasurer</u> - Candidate who is nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected via ballot. Manages the operations of the Alumni Relations Office and the Association Budget</p> | <p><u>Secretary</u> - Candidate for the Council who represents the largest vote gainer via ballot. This person manages the operations of the Alumni Relations Office</p> <p><u>Treasurer</u> - Candidate, nominated by the Membership Committee and elected by the Alumni Body via ballot. This person will manage the Association Budget and Alumni Fund</p> |
| <p><u>VP Alumni Activities</u> - Candidate, nominated by the Nominating Committee, elected by the Alumni Body via ballot, manages/coordinates all alumni events and is responsible of creating local Chapters of the Association and acting as the focal point for local chapters as well as the primary liaison to the Class Representatives.</p> <p><u>Nominating Committee Chairperson</u> - Candidate for the Nominating Committee (separate from council) that is elected by the Alumni Body via ballot and is the largest vote gainer of the Nominating Committee, manages/coordinates the nomination of candidates to council, the election of officers and Council.</p> <p><u>Former Presidents</u> - The two most recent preceding presidents of the Association</p> | <p><u>Membership Chairperson</u> - Candidate for council representing the second largest vote gainer for Council via ballot. Coordinates program to grow and sustain membership of the alumni community</p> <p><u>Membership Vice Chairperson Events</u> - Appointed by the Chairperson. Coordinates events program with the Treasurer</p> <p><u>Membership Vice Chairperson Communications</u> - Appointed by the Chairperson. Coordinates communications plan for alumni</p> <p><u>Membership Vice Chairperson Regional and Affinity</u> - Appointed by the Chairperson. Coordinates regional and affinity group activities</p> <p><u>Membership Vice Chairperson Stewardship</u> - Appointed by the Chairperson, manages/coordinates nomination of candidates for council.</p> |
| <p><u>VP Faculty/Student Liaison</u> - Nominated by the Nominating Committee, elected via Acts as ballot. Acts as Chair to Faculty Committee and liaison to the deans. Assists in selection of faculty and administrative committees, acts as liaison to Student Organizations</p> <p><u>Annual Fund Committee Chairperson</u> - Appointed by the President. Manages the fundraising campaign with the Alumni Office for the Annual Fund only. Produces the Phonathon.</p> | <p><u>School Support Liaison</u> - Candidate for council representing the third largest vote gainer for council via ballot, coordinates liaison committees and is responsible for providing support to students. Coordinates fundraising committees for the Association</p> <p><u>Curricula Liaison to Students</u> - School Support Liaison - liaison with the Deans and assists in the selection of candidates for Alumni Representatives on Cooper Union faculty and administrative committees.</p> <p><u>Alumni Fundraising Liaison</u> - appointed by the School Support Liaison - Coordinates all fundraising from alumni with the Treasurer and Secretary</p> |

an effort to live stream proceedings for non-regional chapters to attend virtually.

Finally, for these recommendations to be effective, it will require a restructuring of the leadership positions of the Alumni Association. This restructuring will need to be done in concert with a new constitution, a new memorandum of agreement, as well as a new groundswell of alumni engagement that has yet to manifest. Executive offices of the association will

Thaddeus Strassberger (BSE '98)



I was born and raised in Oklahoma. At the age of seventeen, with one more year of high school to go, I 'ran away with the circus'-that is, I flew to New York City to spend the summer taking in as much theatre as I could. I got a job working at the Public Theater, and one day when walking in the neighbourhood, I spotted the inscription on the Foundation Building. The words 'ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE AND ART' struck me like a lightning bolt. 'That's what I do. That's who I am,' I thought. A bit of research revealed that I could study engineering, art and architecture through the BSE programme - in the heart of what I considered the centre of the universe. My three criteria for university were: free, in New York City, and excellence. Cooper Union was my only shot!

Being part of Cooper Union was like having an all-access card to whole new worlds. I had the workshops in the Foundation Building, where any idea I had could be realised in wood, steel or plaster. Free admission to MoMA meant that I had free cinema tickets every weekend. A class on Islamic Art took us on a visit to the mosque on 96th street, something that I probably never would have seen the inside of otherwise. The work study programme placed me in positions as diverse as a shop assistant helping art students with welding, an assistant teacher in AutoCAD in the engineering department, and working as a tutor in the writing centre. And since I wasn't haemorrhaging money on tuition, I could spend many evenings in standing room at the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera and off-Broadway plays.

The close contact with administration and faculty that I had is something that I have now learned is extremely rare. I had an idea for an opera event that I wanted to produce in the Great Hall. A single phone call is all it took to get an appointment with the President to ask for some institutional support. After a course in Music History offered brought classical music to a whole class of eager artists and engineers, I gathered support from fellow students to ask for a course in Opera History. It was implemented the next semester. Ideas flowed with alacrity and our intellectual curiosity was supported in a way that was appreciated in the moment, and even more now with the perspective that time has brought.

Even though a career in Engineering was never my main objective, the education that I received at Cooper Union could not have been better tailored to my needs as the professional theatre director and designer that I am today. I know that I didn't learn only 'job skills' (though I did learn many!), but that my curiosity was sharpened, my quest for more knowledge was encouraged, and that my compassion for fellow human beings' diverse backgrounds, aspirations and ambitions was fundamentally reinforced.

The opportunities afforded to me through the truly unique financial situation at Cooper Union have proven invaluable; my world and that of many thousands of others would be poorer without it. With Cooper Union, my only debt is one of gratitude.



need to be directed towards sustaining membership and advocacy for the alumni. These acupuncture treatments can correct the current and maintain a positive energy flow of the community back into The Cooper Union.

Initiative Four: Promote Collaboration and Communication
An Interdisciplinary Cooper Union Journal

In the spirit of "union," the contemporary discourses in each discipline don't need to be kept at a safe distance from one another. Harnessing the strength of its programs and its prestige, Cooper Union should publish an annual interdisciplinary journal that makes use of the talent of its student, its faculty and its alumni bodies, as well as appeal to renowned practitioners from the worlds of art, architecture and engineering.

Following the model of Columbia University's Journal of Literature and Art, a Cooper Union Journal can be entirely edited, designed and produced by students and seek to publish new work from leaders in the different disciplines. This collaborative project between students in the three schools would bridge structural divides among students, and create an end result that would bring attention, press and prestige to the college.

An interdisciplinary journal will offer the contemporary dialogues at Cooper Union into the public and foster a culture of collaboration within Cooper itself.

Public Lecture Series

Cooper Union students don't only learn from faculty, but from one another, from the incredible expertise of shop and lab techs, and from New York City itself. And that's how it should be. Cooper should build on precedents such as its CU@lunch series and, in the School of Art, the "5:15 in 215" series, and create a public lecture series where faculty, adjuncts, alumni, techs and students will give presentations to the community on their work or on a subject pertaining to their work.

By programming a before or after student/alumni discussion on the theme of the lecture, Cooper can help dissolve the boundary between its students and alumni and strengthen education that occurs outside of the classroom, studio or lab.

Following Peter Cooper's belief that education should offer practical training, a public lecture series in which students spoke on their work, or work that was relevant to their studies, would give students valuable experience in addressing an audience. Cooper has a number of good locations it can use to schedule these lectures, such as the Menschel Conference Room, the Rose Auditorium, the Great Hall, or one of its classrooms.

Give alumni a permanent email connection to Cooper

The Alumni Association and Cooper Union communicate with alumni of the school primarily by email. A good metric for how well the Alumni Association and the college can contact its alumni is its database of email addresses, maintained in part through CUAlumni.com. Currently, only 45% of alumni have a valid working address submitted to the alumni database. Cooper can do better. By offering a permanent email address to graduates, Cooper will improve its ability to keep up-to-date contact information for its alumni and more easily engage and inform the alumni community.

Increasingly, this type of service for alumni has become the norm at colleges and universities. It can be a very low cost service with easily imagined benefits such as greater alumni participation and giving, and allows alumni to continue to associate themselves with the college in their personal or professional lives. At Cooper, this can take the form of an @alumni.cooper.edu email address, or, as NYU recently decided, the college can simply let graduates keep their @cooper.edu email.

Recently, NYU signed a contract with Google to use Gmail service for @nyu.edu email accounts at no cost. Cooper should evaluate this as an option.

Define Community

When we say “Cooper community,” what do we mean? From students to faculty, alumni to staff, administration to supporters, the school’s makeup is so various and diverse it is impossible to provide any definition other than a provisional one. In this document, when we say community, we mean that which formed galvanically when it learned Cooper is in trouble.

Many of us first learned of Cooper’s crisis through a petition called “Save Cooper Union Without Tuition” that spread rapidly over social networking channels. Others found out from the New York Times on the day of the President’s Halloween announcement. A discussion group called Save Cooper Union arose on Facebook, quickly drawing 1,500 members. Disturbed to hear only at the eleventh hour that the endowment was eroded to the point of exhaustion, many focused on dissecting the small amount of information that could be gleaned from publicly available financial reports and tax filings. Others focused on questions more intangible than the revenue and expense columns of a balance sheet.

Between the social media discussions and student actions, it was clear there were any number of people who wanted very badly to have an honest discussion about the crisis, and get to work fixing it - Cooper people are, after all, problem solvers. We came together in December 2011 in the Great Hall for a public summit in order to share information and start talking about solutions. This ambitious meeting was the first of its kind for the Cooper community, with fourteen speakers

and hundreds of anxious, passionate and engaged people. It lasted nearly four hours, with many staying even later to participate in the first of six community breakout sessions.

We found we all wanted the same things, for the most part: open and candid communication from the Administration, action from the Alumni Association, and an immediate statement from the Board of Trustees on their position on the mission. We articulated to ourselves and each other what is precious about Cooper Union and must be protected, and then brainstormed on how to save it. All sessions were open to anyone who cared to come and the complete and uncensored results were posted online.

This document provides an overview of our most salient ideas to date, everything from informed perspectives on the financials to personal insights into why Cooper matters. An online companion piece detailing all the ideas to come out of this process will be an ongoing effort. We hope the Administration and Board, who have appointed task forces and hired private consultants to advise them, will take the path we’ve laid out seriously. Perhaps we’ll all take the next step together, in an honest, candid discussion where all the cards are on the table and nothing is pre-negotiated.

Maureen Cummins (A '85)



I grew up in a working class neighborhood in Staten Island, born to parents who never attended college (my mother for lack of money, my father for lack of interest), and I can still recall being told repeatedly that there would no money for that. I watched my sister work an exhausting waitressing schedule just to attend classes at the concrete slab of a building that housed Staten Island Community College. I knew I didn’t want to go to SICC, especially since I’d been told by my teachers that I had talent as an artist. When I applied—and was subsequently accepted—to Cooper Union, it was nothing short of a dream come true.

As a junior at Cooper, I took a class called The Art of the Book, fell in love with what I learned there, went on to serve apprenticeships with master printers and binders in New York and California, and have been printing limited editions ever since. In the nearly three decades that have passed, I’ve won many awards and honors, but none of them compare to what I experienced when I opened a certain thin white envelope and read the line that began, “We are pleased to inform you...” I often compare that magical, improbable moment to when Charlie Bucket won a ticket to Willie Wonka’s chocolate factory. Even now, just thinking back to that day brings tears to my eyes.

In spite of forging a successful career for myself, doing work that I love, there have many instances when I faltered and when I lost faith in myself. One of the things that got me through such dark times was the knowledge that Peter Cooper believed in me, believed in me enough to provide me with a free education. And that has made all the difference.







THE CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 3
59 East 4th Street - New York, NY 10003
Phone (212) 533-5300 - Fax (212) 533-3659
www.cb3manhattan.org--info@cb3manhattan.org

Dominic Pisciotta, Board Chair

Susan Stetzer, District Manager

Public Information Meeting Regarding 51 Astor Place demolition

Sciame Construction Company will present information regarding the demolition of 51 Astor Place and answer questions and concerns. (this is the former Cooper Union Engineering Building)

When & where: **June 7 at 6:00 p.m.**
At 51 Astor Place

Please pass this on to all who may be interested.



N.Y. / REGION

Cooper Union Won't Be Free, Ending an Era

By ARIEL KAMINER APRIL 23, 2013



A crowd gave Cooper Union's Foundation Building a symbolic hug Tuesday after the East Village college decided to charge tuition. Michael Nagle for The New York Times

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The [Cooper Union](#) for the Advancement of Science and Art, which is one of the last tuition-free colleges in the country but has been under severe financial strain, announced on Tuesday that for the first time in more than a century it will charge undergraduates to attend.

The decision ends almost two years of roiling debate about an education that was long revered for being “free as air and water,” and stood as the school’s most distinguishing feature, insulating it until now from concerns about the rising cost of a college degree.

More

Under the plan adopted by Cooper Union's trustees, the prestigious college, based in the East Village, will continue need-blind admissions. But beginning in fall 2014, it will charge students based on what the college described as a steeply sliding scale, with those deemed able paying around \$20,000, and many others, including those "with the greatest needs," paying nothing. The change would not apply to undergraduates enrolled as of this fall.

"The time has come to set our institution on a path that will enable it to survive and thrive well into the future," the board chairman, Mark Epstein, said

in an announcement to students and faculty members in the college's Great Hall. "Under the new policy, the Cooper Union will continue to adhere to the vision of Peter Cooper, who founded the institution specifically to provide a quality education to those who might not otherwise be able to afford it."

RELATED COVERAGE

Cooper Union Board Delays Tuition Decision
MARCH 7, 2013



Cooper Union students reacted to the decision, announced on Tuesday, to resume tuition for

undergraduates starting in 2014.

Michael Nagle for The New York Times

Some students wept during the announcement; others left, declaring there was nothing more to hear. “I can’t even process this,” said Ashley Katz, 20, a second-year architecture student from California. “One of my professors came out and said, ‘Drape the whole school in black.’”

After the speech, opponents of the decision gathered outside the Great Hall, where Abraham Lincoln gave one of his most famous speeches, in opposition to the westward expansion of slavery, and staged what they called a walkout.

Cooper Union opened in 1859, endowed by the industrialist Peter Cooper with valuable real estate and a mission of educating working-class New Yorkers, at no cost to them. Early on, some students who could afford to pay did so, but no undergraduates have paid for more than 100 years. Along with the nation’s military academies, Cooper Union was among the only remaining schools in the United States that did not charge tuition.

The absence of a tuition bill and the high quality of its instruction have over time changed the college’s identity; today the institution that graduated the architect Daniel Libeskind, the graphic designer Milton Glaser and the artist Alex Katz, and even instructed an inventor named Thomas Edison is one of the most selective colleges in the country. Its three schools enroll about 1,000 art, architecture and engineering students from every location and every station of life, but a budget crisis lately forced the college to wrestle with changes that would once have been inconceivable.

According to Cooper Union’s president, Jamshed Bharucha, it currently operates at a \$12 million annual deficit. The number reflects several factors: expenses that have risen faster than revenues, a growing administrative staff, disappointing fund-raising drives and, most significantly, \$10 million a year in payments on a \$175 million loan the school took out a few years ago, in part so that it could invest money in the stock market. In 2018, an increase in rent from the college’s biggest asset,

the land under the Chrysler Building, will overtake expenses, but only for a short while, he has said.

Last April, Dr. Bharucha announced that Cooper Union would collect tuition from graduate students, who at present make up a very small fraction of the college's population. He later instructed faculty members to submit proposals for additional revenue streams, a directive that met with mixed results. The faculty at the art school refused to comply; in response, the administration refused to send out early acceptance letters for art school applicants.

Meanwhile, students, faculty members and alumni who advocated for a harder look at Cooper Union's expenses convened large assemblies to demand that the administration open its books. Some staged an occupation of the school's historic Foundation Building.

Many students quickly filed out of the auditorium Tuesday, but others stayed to submit questions to Mr. Epstein. The first one was shouted: "Do you really think it's going to work?"

"Yes we do," he said. "Hopefully forever."

The tuition the school expects to charge is still below that of many prestigious private colleges. At the Rhode Island School of Design, an urban school with a celebrated art program, tuition is \$42,622; at Carnegie Mellon University, which has a highly ranked engineering program, tuition is \$46,670.

Last year, Cooper Union hired a consulting firm to consider the effect of collecting tuition from undergraduates. (Officially the college lists a price of \$38,500 a year, but extends to all students what it calls a full-tuition scholarship.)

The firm advised against reducing the scholarships by more than 25 percent. Anything beyond that, it said, would weaken the applicant pool and arouse expectations for costly amenities that the college does not offer.

But under the plan adopted by the trustees, Cooper Union will reduce those scholarships for some students by as much as 50 percent. Asked why they

had exceeded the consultants' recommendation, Mr. Epstein said that at the lower percentage, the college would have to impose tuition across the board, rather than on a sliding scale.

Mr. Epstein argued that the new approach would actually provide greater financial support to needy students, by allowing the school to subsidize not only their tuition but also the expense of living in New York, which he said drove some qualified students off to better-endowed institutions.

The trustees' vote was originally scheduled to take place last December, with the results to be announced in January. But according to a person familiar with the board's deliberations but not authorized to discuss them, the vote was postponed several times by a substantial minority of trustees who were "turning over every unturned stone," in the hope that they could stabilize the college's finances without charging undergraduate tuition.

The board looked "very, very carefully" at the option of closing one of Cooper Union's three schools, this person said, the only viable way to reduce the faculty without violating the terms of tenure. It also considered shrinking the size of the student body, selling off real estate and trying to hold expenses down. In all cases, the projected savings were not sufficient.

When the vote eventually came about on the broad question of whether to impose undergraduate tuition, this person said, it passed by a significant margin; when the board later voted on a specific tuition plan, it passed without opposition, and only a few abstentions.

Some of the most vocal members of the Cooper Union community have argued that any tuition would alter the essential character of the school.

A couple of hours after Mr. Epstein spoke, the group of protesting students and faculty members had swelled to about 200 outside the Great Hall. Someone brought a cardboard sign that said, "50 percent free." Mauricio Higuera, 28, a fourth-year art student, addressed the group: "For 150 years," he said, "this building, these columns, have held a dream, a dream for free education for all. I propose we all join hands and give this institution a big hug, because it needs it." The assembled crowd joined hands and did as he suggested.

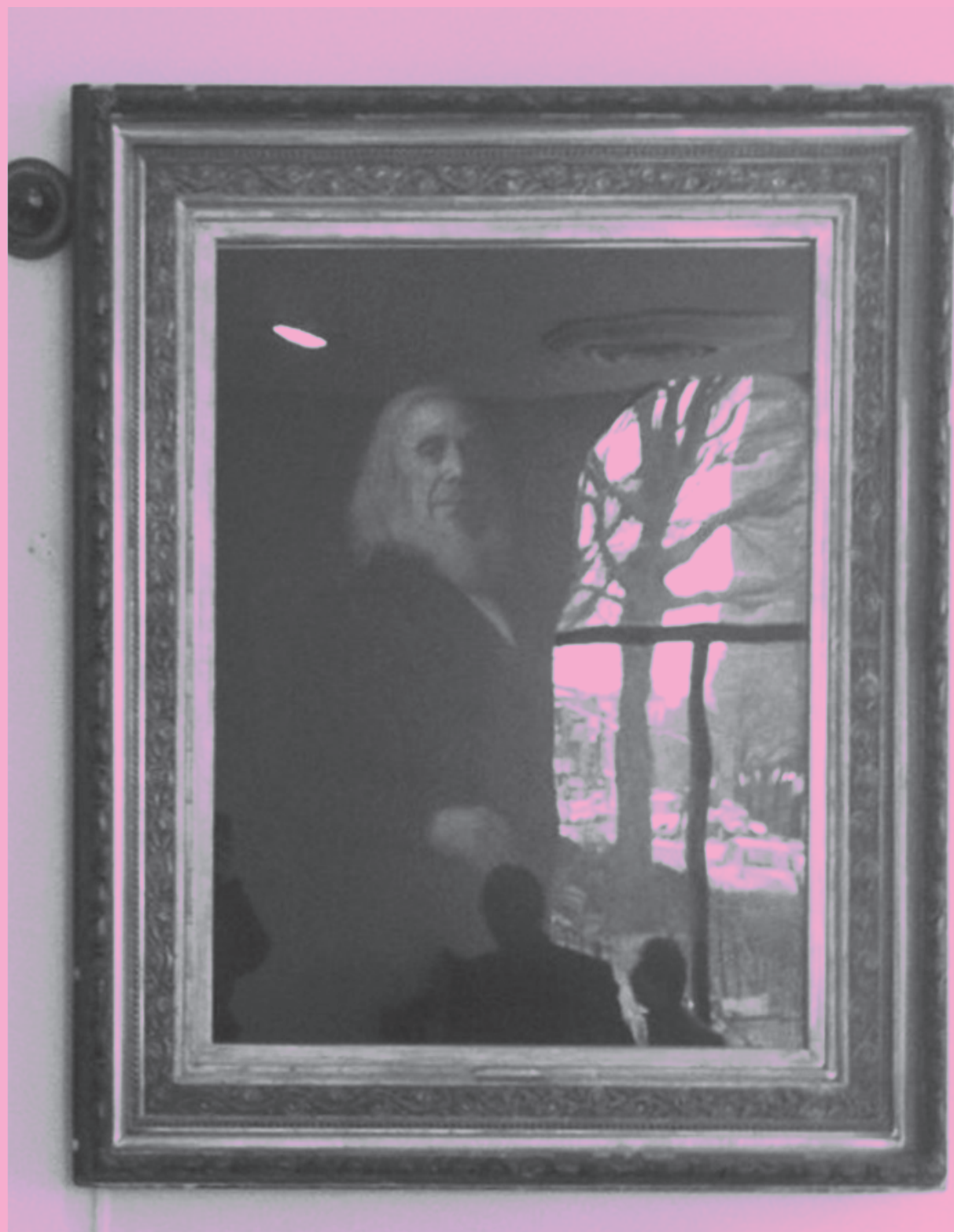
Correction: April 23, 2013

An earlier version of this article misidentified the Cooper Union official who announced the tuition policy to students and faculty. It was Mark Epstein, the chairman of the board of trustees, not Jamshed Bharucha, the Cooper Union president.

Julie Turkewitz contributed reporting.

A version of this article appears in print on April 24, 2013, on page A1 of the New York edition with the headline: Cooper Union Won't Be Free, Ending an Era. [Order Reprints](#) | [Today's Paper](#) | [Subscribe](#)







WE ARE

DONE.

WITH THIS

BUILDING



Villager file photo

George Campbell Jr., The Cooper Union's president, with model of planned new academic building in October 2004

Art students suffer angst as Cooper readies to build

By Lincoln Anderson

The Cooper Union is getting ready to demolish its Hewitt Building on Third Ave. and replace it with a striking new nine-story “green” building designed by Thom Mayne.

But 120 art students — mostly juniors and seniors — who just set up their art studios in the Hewitt Building in September are now reportedly undergoing serious angst about what this \$120 million project will mean for them.

The art students were recently told they must clear out their studios by mid-November, and that new studios have been prepared for them in Long Island City.

But the prospect of having studios in Queens and schlepping back and forth to the East Village — often while lugging in cumbersome artwork for critiques by faculty members — has them up in arms. Being in Long Island City will mean having to take both the 7 and 6 trains to get to The Cooper Union — not to mention, a long 10-minute walk from the studios to the 7 stop in Long Island City.

The plan was detailed to the art students at a meeting a week and a half ago by Bob Hawks, the head of The Cooper Union's real estate, and Saskia Bos, the art school's dean.

The university had secured a space in Manhattan at 28th St. and Park Ave. S., just two stops away on the 6 train from The Cooper Union's campus, but it fell through, the officials explained. To delay vacating the Hewitt Building would cost the school an extra \$8 million, the students were told.

“One girl cried at the meeting,” said one person who attended the meeting, requesting anonymity. “There were students saying, ‘So you're saying we're not worth \$8 million?’ ” Students demanded shuttle service and that the studios be open 24 hours. In short, the source said, “The students don't want to go to Long Island City — not

unless they get something really sweet out of the deal.”

On Tuesday, Claire McCarthy, The Cooper Union’s spokesperson, said the two parties couldn’t come to agreement on the terms of the length of the lease at 28th St. and Park Ave. S., so the school returned to looking for space in Long Island City, where it had originally looked. According to a source, the landlord did not want to extend the lease beyond two years.

As for the \$8 million figure, McCarthy said, “I can’t verify that. Any delay in construction is costly. We are committed to building this building — the first green laboratory building in New York.”

The new Third Ave. building — which will be covered with a special stainless-steel mesh skin that will keep it cool in summer and warm in winter — will take two years to build once work gets underway, McCarthy said. There was a slight delay, in that the school had planned to start demolition in August; but the project should start soon and is still scheduled to take two years, she said.

Most of the new building will be filled by the school’s engineering department — hence McCarthy’s calling it a “laboratory building.” However, the art studios will occupy the top floors.

As for the Long Island City studios, she said they are being fixed up with a new heat, ventilation and cooling system and will be as comfortable as possible.

“We searched for quite a long while for suitable space,” McCarthy said. “And we believe we have found in Long Island City excellent space for them. It’s right near P.S. 1 — in an arts district.

“We know they will have to travel. We are working hard to make a smooth transition. There will be transportation provided to take their work out to Long Island City [for the initial move], and possibly for later in the semester.... Change is difficult.”

The studios will, in fact, be open 24 hours, she said. However, the shop — where metal melting and soldering and woodcutting is done, overseen by technicians — won’t be open around the clock.

McCarthy noted that it’s unusual for arts students to have their own studios and it’s something that The Cooper Union is proud of.

The elite school offers each of its 1,000 students a free \$30,000-equivalent annual tuition. In addition to the 150 art students, there are 500 engineering students and a smaller number of architecture students.

As for the journey from Long Island City, McCarthy said, “I understand it was a 5-minute walk from the subway — but I’m not going to quibble about it. I was at P.S. 1 recently and it took 5 minutes [to walk to the subway]. People have to adjust.”

Students for a Free Cooper Union
Monday, December 3rd, 2012

Students for a Free Cooper Union lock-into Cooper Union's Foundation Building to preserve free education

To The Cooper Union Administration,

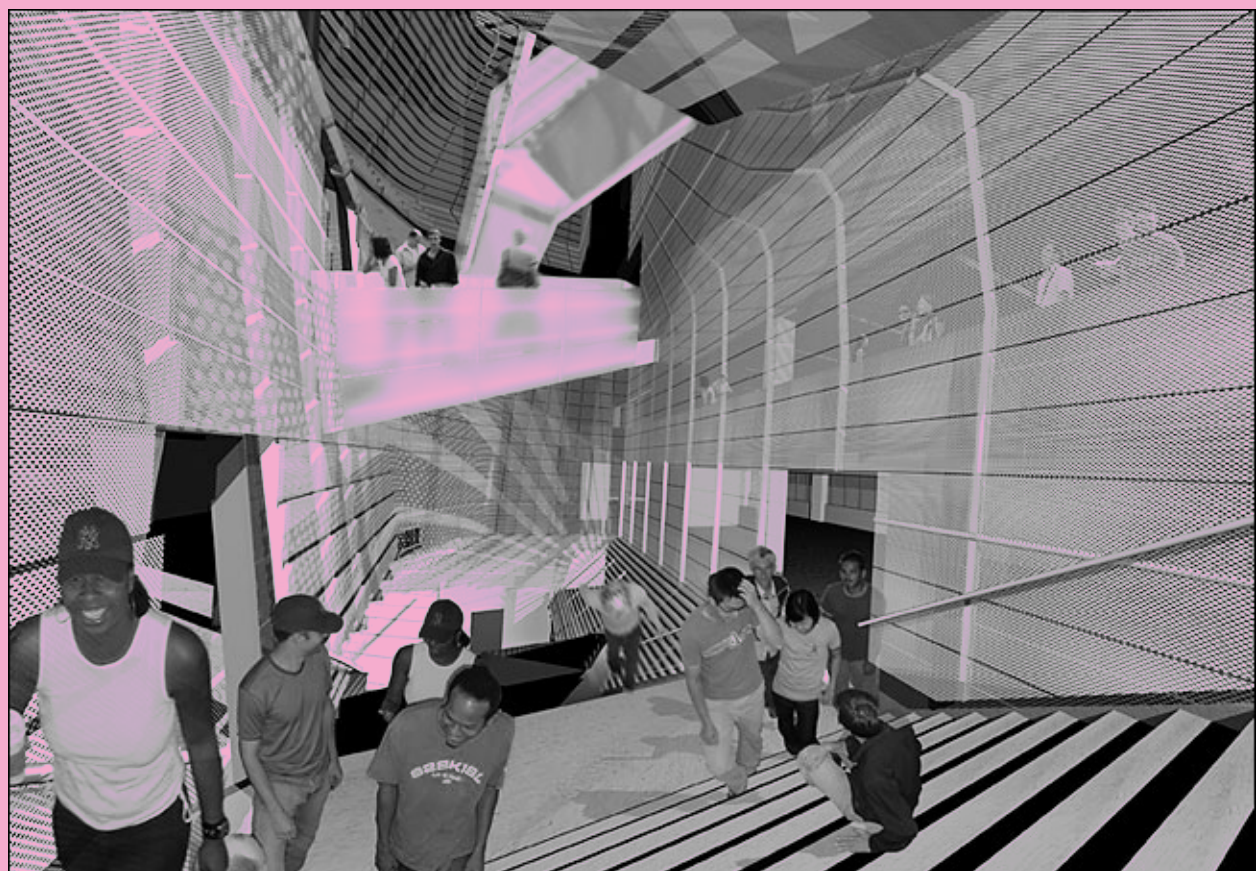
We, the Students for a Free Cooper Union, in solidarity with the global student struggle and today's Day of Action, have locked ourselves into The Peter Cooper Suite on the top floor of Cooper Union's Foundation Building. This action is in response to the lack of transparency and accountability that has plagued this institution for decades and now threatens the college's mission of free education.

We have reclaimed this space because we believe you are leading the college in the wrong direction. An expansionist strategy and lack of accountability have put this college in a financial deficit, and we reject the current style of governance that emulates those failures. We believe that all tuition-based revenue-generating programs are a departure from Cooper Union's historic mission and will corrupt the college's role as an ethical model for higher education. To secure this invaluable opportunity for future generations, we have taken the only recourse available to us.

Within this space we have taken all necessary precautions to ensure the fullest extent of safety, security, and expression. Entrances to the Peter Cooper Suite have been secured by wood and steel barricades designed to not damage the building and be easily removable from the room's interior in the event of emergency. A first aid and CPR certified student is also present in the room. We have taken all preventative measures in securing the banner. It does not endanger the building, surrounding area, or persons inside and out.

We will hold this space with moral insistence and safety precaution until action has been taken to meet the following demands:

1. **The administration must publicly affirm the college's commitment to free education.** They will stop pursuing new tuition-based educational programs and eliminate other ways in which students are charged for education.
2. **The Board of Trustees must immediately implement structural changes with the goal of creating open flows of information and democratic decision-making structures.** The administration's gross mismanagement of the school cannot be reversed within the same systems which allowed the crisis to occur. To this end, we have outlined actions that the board must take:
 - Record board meetings and make minutes publicly available.
 - Appoint a student and faculty member from each school as voting members of the board.
 - Implement a process by which board members may be removed through a vote from the Cooper Union community, comprised of students, faculty, alumni, and administrators.
3. **President Bharucha steps down.**





Joe Riley <pleasedontfront@gmail.com>

Fwd: Student Council Update

1 message

audrey snyder <audrey.c.snyder@gmail.com>

Sat, Oct 29, 2011 at 2:16 PM

To: Joe Riley <pleasedontfront@gmail.com>, Olivia Ahn <oliviaalexandria@gmail.com>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Byron Smith** <smith12@cooper.edu>
 Date: Sat, Oct 29, 2011 at 1:55 PM
 Subject: Fwd: Student Council Update
 To: audrey.c.snyder@gmail.com

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Student Council Update
 Date: Fri, 21 Oct 2011 18:00:07 -0400
 From: Robin Kutner <robin.kutner@gmail.com>
 To: Alex Proctor <procto@cooper.edu>, Alice Yang <yang4@cooper.edu>, Andrin Molla <molla@cooper.edu>, Ashley Kim <kim54@cooper.edu>, Byron Smith <smith12@cooper.edu>, Dave Berezovsky <berezo3@cooper.edu>, Dhongik Yoon <yoony7@cooper.edu>, Dunie Navarro <navarr3@cooper.edu>, Ed Levshteyn <levsht@cooper.edu>, Emily McCarthy <mccart@cooper.edu>, Eric Kim <kim52@cooper.edu>, Hindi Kornbluth <kornbl@cooper.edu>, Jennifer Guia <guia@cooper.edu>, Jillian Sheridan <sherid@cooper.edu>, Joann Lee <joann.lee8x@gmail.com>, Lisa Liu <lisliu1107@gmail.com>, Maike Fillmer <fillme@cooper.edu>, Mindy Wong <mintywong@gmail.com>, Na Kyung Lee <lee47@cooper.edu>, Peter Liu <liu7@cooper.edu>, Ryan Poling-Skutvik <rdskut@comcast.net>, Samjit Walia <walia@cooper.edu>

Hi everyone,

As you may have heard, Cooper Union is in a difficult financial situation. The following is the student council's official statement on the issue:

The President is looking at all options to balance the budget. If we ignore this issue, there is no doubt that this school's endowment will not last more than 10-15 years. The most drastic change would be to close down 1-2 schools. The consequences for this action is that all degrees will be disenfranchised. Other options include charging tuition, expanding our programs and charging for them, etc. We assure you that the President is looking at options but most are not enough to sustain the school. The deficit is of a magnitude that cannot be fix easily by donations.

Please get back to me with any questions, concerns, or ideas that you have about this issue by this coming Tuesday.

Most importantly, this as this is a Cooper issue, please keep this information internal to the Cooper Union community.

Thanks,



Tim Noble <timothynoble@gmail.com>

[SaveAntioch] closing antioch

9 messages

Emily Aaron <emilyaaron@gmail.com>
To: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org

Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 1:37 PM

hey all-

so i just talked to someone on campus and apparently antioch may be closing its doors. according to sources, steve is in a meeting with staff and faculty right now and the only way for antioch to not go bankrupt is to close its doors. anyone else heard this or know anything else?

emily A.
class of 2006

SaveAntioch mailing list

SaveAntioch@lists.antiochians.org

http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists_antiochians.org

Chad Johnston <johnston@thepeopleschannel.org>

Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 2:06 PM

Reply-To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org
To: Emily Aaron <emilyaaron@gmail.com>
Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org

I hear they are in a meeting to discuss the possibility of three options...this I hear from a good source...

1. Close the doors
2. Fire more folks and keep things the way they are
3. Merge with McGregor

As soon as I hear more, I'll try to post it to the list...

Keep your fingers crossed...

Warm regards,

Chad A. Johnston - Executive Director
The Peoples Channel
300AC South Elliott Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
919.960.0088
www.thepeopleschannel.org

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Board Member
The Alliance for Community Media
Washington, DC
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"He felt that his whole life was some kind of dream and he sometimes wondered whose it was and whether they were enjoying it."

"We felt that
we should share
Douglas Adams
"And the day came
when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more
painful than the risk it took to blossom."

Douglas Adams

"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."

Anais Nin

"It is difficult to produce a television documentary that is both incisive and probing when every twelve minutes one is interrupted by twelve dancing rabbits singing about toilet paper."

Rod Serling

"Life without dead time."

Graffiti, Paris 1968

Emily Aaron wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

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Chad Johnston <johnston@thepeopleschannel.org>

Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 2:40 PM

Reply-To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org

To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org

Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org

Just heard... the college is closing... I could not get through to the pres' office, but others have... and it sounds bad... sad sad day...

Chad A. Johnston - Executive Director
The Peoples Channel
305AC South Elliott Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
919.960.0098
www.thepeopleschannel.org

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Rod Serling

"Life without dead time."

Graffiti, Paris 1968

[Quoted text hidden]

SaveAntioch mailing list

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http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists.antiochians.org

Chad Johnston <johnston@thepeopleschannel.org>

Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 2:55 PM

Reply-To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org

To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org

Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org

Antioch College Community
Steven Lawry,
President
June 12, 2007

It is my sad duty to inform you that the Antioch University Board of Trustees decided on June 9th, 2007, that Antioch College would be closed from July 1st, 2008. The decision was taken in light of the College's very fragile financial circumstances, resulting from low enrollments and insufficient funding from other sources, including endowment income and gifts. In making this decision, the Board declared the College to be in a state of financial exigency, which enables the administration to bring the operations of the College to an orderly conclusion by July 1st next year.

The University will begin to plan for the eventual possible reopening of the College by 2012. The new Antioch College would, if sufficient financial support is secured, have up-to-date facilities and a curriculum strongly attractive to larger number of students and based on Antioch's traditional educational values.

The College will operate normally over the course of the coming academic year, with a view to graduating as many members of the fourth-year class as possible, and to ensuring the academic progress of first, second and third year students. Arrangements will be made to help qualified students complete their degrees at McGregor or at other campuses in the Antioch University system. We will do all that we can to help students transfer to other schools that they might wish to attend.

Faculty contracts will end from July 1st, 2008. The College will be retaining over the course of the coming year staff members necessary to ensure the College's effective operations, being mindful that

as programs and operations wind down over the coming months, appropriate staff reductions will be made.

The Dean of Faculty will be convening urgent meetings of the Curriculum Committee to plan academic support for students in the coming year. I have already met with our Community Managers and they will have key leadership roles to play in helping sustain a rich and rewarding campus life over the coming year.

Our staff in Human Resources will be distributing information on personal counseling resources available through the College's Employee Assistance Program. Other forms of assistance to help faculty and staff manage their professional transitions are being looked into, and I hope to report back to you very soon.

I appreciate your hard work and commitment to Antioch College over the years. This is a vitally important institution. I am deeply distressed to have to share this news with you.

[Quoted text hidden]

SaveAntioch mailing list
SaveAntioch@lists.antiochians.org
http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists_antiochians.org

Nicholas Peterson <npeterson@prosperodesign.com>

Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 2:55 PM

Reply-To: npeterson@prosperodesign.com
 To: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org

Posted on the College's site.

Release Date: June 12, 2007

Antioch College Suspends Operations to Design 21st Century Campus

State-of-the-Art Campus projected to open in 2012

YELLOW SPRINGS, OH- On June 9, 2007, Antioch University's Board of Trustees voted to suspend operations on July 1, 2008 of Antioch College, the University's undergraduate residential program in Yellow Springs, Ohio, with the intention of reopening a state-of-the art campus.

The Chancellor will establish a Design and Development Commission to determine the long-term future of the College with the intention of opening a re-developed undergraduate campus. An Academic Design Team will be appointed to design a new undergraduate curriculum reflecting the College's strong traditions and values while meeting the needs of today's students.

The College will continue to serve its current and newly accepted students with a strong academic program for the 2007-08 academic year.

For the 2008-09 academic year, all students will be offered degree completion opportunities at Antioch

University McGregor which is moving to a new facility in Yellow Springs in September, 2007. In addition to the McGregor opportunity, students who have successfully completed the first two years of their bachelor's degree will be offered reasonable opportunities to complete their degree at Antioch University's other degree completion programs in Seattle, Los Angeles and Santa Barbara. Students wishing to transfer to other colleges and universities based on the requirements of the other institutions will be assisted in doing so.

Over the past several years, Antioch College has experienced a continuing decline in its student enrollment. Given its small endowment and heavy dependence on tuition revenue, this low enrollment has threatened the College's survival. Efforts to balance the College's budget over the years through faculty and staff reductions, programmatic changes and deferred maintenance of the physical plant have eroded the confidence students and parents have in the College's academic program. After careful analysis the Board determined that the College's resources are inadequate to continue providing a quality education for its students beyond July 1, 2008.

The College's low enrollment and lack of adequate funding led to the decision to suspend operations and declare financial exigency as required by the faculty personnel policy.

About Antioch University: The University is founded on the principles of a rigorous liberal arts education, innovative experiential learning and socially engaged citizenship. These campuses all nurture in their students the knowledge, skills and habits of reflection to act as lifelong learners, democratic leaders and global citizens who live lives of meaning and purpose.

In addition to the College, Antioch University is comprised of five nonresidential campuses in Keene, NH, Yellow Springs, OH, Seattle, WA and Santa Barbara and Los Angeles, CA, all accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. These campuses attract students wishing to complete BA degrees, seek graduate degrees and/or prepare for new careers.

Antioch College, founded in 1852, is part of Antioch University, which includes Antioch University New England in Keene, New Hampshire; Antioch University Seattle in Washington; Antioch University Southern California in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara; and Antioch University McGregor in Yellow Springs, Ohio. The University's administrative offices are also located in Yellow Springs. For more than 150 years, Antioch has been a leader in higher education, long known for its commitment to educational innovation and social justice.

SaveAntioch mailing list
SaveAntioch@lists.antiochians.org
http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists.antiochians.org

Ed Hush <edhush@yahoo.com>
 To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org
 Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org

Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 3:15 PM

And this as I'm writing that other letter to you all.
 Hmm- still relevant, as all must participate if we expect to do so at the New Antioch College.
 The process having been so hidden, should most probably be more transparent, with the law being the way it is, exactly how realistic is this and can the community survive the transition?

One Dream,
 Ed Trippel 82'
 (Contact: Ed Trippel)
 ONE DREAM

ONE MIND
ONE HEART
ONE PEOPLE
POWER IS THE PEOPLE
POWER IS THE IMAGINATION

Burding a website is a piece of cake
Yahoo! Small Business gives you all the tools to get online.

SaveAntioch mailing list
SaveAntioch@lists.antiochians.org
http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists.antiochians.org

Chad Johnston <johnston@thepeopleschannel.org>

Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 3:20 PM

Reply-To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org

To: Ed Hush <edhush@yahoo.com>

Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org

My guess, and it's just a guess Ed, is that the college will not be able to survive this transition...but...that's just me. Given that the BOD have not been very supportive of the College over the last 6 odd years, that they will just bank on the land and make money off the name... Sorry, feeling a little, nope, a lot, bitter...

Chad A. Johnston - Executive Director
The Peoples Channel
300AC South Elliott Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
919.960.0888
www.thepeopleschannel.org

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"He felt that his whole life was some kind of dream and he sometimes wondered whose it was and whether they were enjoying it."
Douglas Adams

"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."
Anais Nin

"It is difficult to produce a television documentary that is both incisive and probing when every twelve minutes one is interrupted by twelve dancing rabbits singing about toilet paper."
Rod Serling

"Life without dead time."
Graffiti, Paris 1968

[Quoted text hidden]

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SaveAntioch@lists.antiochians.org
http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists_antiochians.org

Robert Devine <bdevine@antioch-college.edu>

Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 3:38 PM

To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org

Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org

sad indeed...text of Steve Lawry's announcement pasted below.

Bob

[Quoted text hidden]

johnston@thepeopleschannel.org on Tuesday, June 12, 2007 at 3:40 PM -0500 wrote:

>Just heard...the college is closing...i could not get through to the
 >pres' office, but others have...and it sounds bad...sad sad day...

>

>Chad A. Johnston - Executive Director

>The Peoples Channel

>300AC South Elliott Road

>Chapel Hill, NC 27514

>919 960 0088

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> Douglas Adams

>

>"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful

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> Anas Nin
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>emily A.
>class of 2006
>
>
>-----
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>http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists.antiochians.org
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>SaveAntioch mailing list
>[mailto:SaveAntioch@lists.antiochians.org]
>]SaveAntioch@lists.antiochians.org
>http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists.antiochians.org

Robert H. Devine
 College Professor
 Antioch College
 Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387

Our lives begin to end
 the day we become silent
 about things that matter"

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
 (Quoted text hidden)

Tim Noble <timothynoble@gmail.com>
 To: James Dixon <jpdix@aol.com>

Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 6:41 PM

Forwarded Conversation
 Subject: [SaveAntioch] closing antioch

From: Emily Aaron <emilyaaron@gmail.com>
 To: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org
 Date: Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 2:37 PM

hey all-

so i just talked to someone on campus and apparently antioch may be closing its doors. according to sources, steve is in a meeting with staff and faculty right now and the only way for antioch to not go bankrupt is to close its doors. anyone else heard this or know anything else?

emily A.
 class of 2006

SaveAntioch mailing list
SaveAntioch@lists.antiochians.org
http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists.antiochians.org

From: Chad Johnston <johnston@thepeopleschannel.org>
 Reply-To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org
 To: Emily Aaron <emilyaaron@gmail.com>
 Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org
 Date: Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 3:06 PM

I hear they are in a meeting to discuss the possibility of three options...this I hear from a good source...

1. Close the doors
2. Fire more folks and keep things the way they are
3. Merge with McGregor

As soon as I hear more, I'll try to post it to the list...
 Keep your fingers crossed...
 Warm regards,

The Peoples Cha
300AC South Elrot
Chapel Hill, NC 27
919 960 0088
MAIL: thepeopleschannel.org
DONATE: www.thepeopleschannel.org/donations.htm

Chad A. Johnston - Executive Director
The Peoples Channel
300AC South Elrott Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
919 960 0088
www.thepeopleschannel.org

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Board Member
The Alliance for Community Media
Washington, DC
www.alliancecm.org

"He felt that his whole life was some kind of dream and he sometimes wondered whose it was and whether they were enjoying it."
Douglas Adams

"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."
Anais Nin

"It is difficult to produce a television documentary that is both incisive and probing when every twelve minutes one is interrupted by twelve dancing rabbits singing about toilet paper."
Rod Serling

"Life without dead time"
Graffiti, Paris 1968

Emily Aaron wrote:
[Quoted text hidden]

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Reply-To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org
To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org
Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org
Date: Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 3:40 PM

Just heard...the college is closing...i could not get through to the pres' office, but others have...and it sounds bad...sad sad day...
Chad A. Johnston - Executive Director

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From: Chad Johnston <johnston@thepeopleschannel.org>
 Reply-To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org
 To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org
 Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org
 Date: Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 3:55 PM

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

SaveAntioch mailing list
SaveAntioch@lists.antiochians.org
http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists.antiochians.org

From: Nicholas Peterson <npeterson@prosperodesign.com>
 Reply-To: npeterson@prosperodesign.com
 To: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org
 Date: Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 3:55 PM

odd reply 7-31
name
Sorry being a
Chad A. Johnston
The Peoples Channel
3004C South East
Chase, A.C. USA

[Quoted text hidden]

survival Efforts to balance the College's budget over the years

[Quoted text hidden]

SaveAntioch mailing list

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http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists.antiochians.org

From: Ed Hush <edhush@yahoo.com>

To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org

Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org

Date: Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 4:15 PM

And this as I'm writing that other letter to you all
Hm- still relevant, as all must participate if we expect to do so at
the New Antioch College
The process having been so hidden, should most probably be more
transparent, with the law being the way it is, exactly how realistic
is this and can the community survive the transition?

One Dream,

Ed Trippel '92

[Quoted text hidden]ONE DREAM

ONE MIND

ONE HEART

ONE PEOPLE

POWER IS THE PEOPLE

POWER IS THE IMAGINATION

Building a website is a piece of cake.
Yahoo! Small Business gives you all the tools to get online.

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From: Chad Johnston <johnston@thepeopleschannel.org>

Reply-To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org

To: Ed Hush <edhush@yahoo.com>

Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org

Date: Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 4:20 PM

My guess, and it's just a guess Ed, is that the college will not be
able to survive this transition but that's just me. Given that
the BOD have not been very supportive of the College over the last 6

odd years, that they will just bank on the land and make money off the name...

Sorry, feeling a little, nope, a lot, bitter...
 Chad A. Johnston - Executive Director
 The Peoples Channel
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 Chapel Hill, NC 27514
 919 960 0088
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"Life without dead time"
 Grafitto, Paris 1966

[Quoted text hidden]

SaveAntioch mailing list
SaveAntioch@lists.antiochians.org
http://lists.antiochians.org/mailman/listinfo/saveantioch_lists.antiochians.org

From: Robert Devine <rdevine@antioch-college.edu>
 To: johnston@thepeopleschannel.org
 Cc: saveantioch@lists.antiochians.org
 Date: Tue, Jun 12, 2007 at 4:38 PM

sad indeed... text of Steve Lawry's announcement pasted below.

Bob
 [Quoted text hidden]johnston@thepeopleschannel.org on Tuesday, June 12, 2007 at 3:40 PM -0500
 wrote:
 >Just heard... the college is closing... i could not get through to the
 >'pres' office, but others have... and it sounds bad... sad sad day...
 >
 >Chad A. Johnston - Executive Director



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[Quoted text hidden]>| <http://www.thepeopleschannel.org>
[Quoted text hidden]
[Quoted text hidden]

NONSTOP ANTIOCH MOVING FORWARD IN THE WAKE OF FAILED NEGOTIATIONS TO SAVE ANTIOCH COLLEGE

****Faculty and College Revival Fund Taking Immediate Steps to Keep the Spirit of Antioch College Alive and Fight Runaway University Board of Trustees****

Yellow Springs, Ohio, May 9, 2008 – Alumni, faculty and staff renewed their commitment to fight to save Antioch College, the 154 year old liberal arts institution known for its groundbreaking educational innovations, in the wake of the announcement today that final talks between the Antioch University Board of Trustees and the Antioch College Continuation Corporation had failed. “We are outraged at the Board’s decision to suspend College operations rather than accept an extremely generous offer that would have kept the College open and put the entire University on a sound financial footing,” said Ellen Borgersen, Acting President of the College Revival Fund, Inc. “Nonstop Antioch will keep up the fight by supporting the dedicated faculty and staff who



have committed to keeping the spirit of Antioch College alive here in Yellow Springs, and pursuing legal action against a runaway Board of Trustees that has abandoned its institutional mission and breached its fiduciary duties in many ways.”

Nonstop Antioch is supported by the Antioch College Alumni Association and the College Revival Fund (CRF), a 501(c)(3) established in 2007 that has raised over \$19 million in cash and pledges to save the College. The CRF has committed \$1 million of its current cash holdings to Nonstop Antioch, and resolved to raise the additional funding necessary to keep it going through the 2008-09 academic year and beyond.

A number of Antioch College faculty and staff, whose contracts with Antioch University end on June 30, have been hard at work planning curriculum, preparing a budget, and establishing governance structures based upon Antioch’s core values of shared governance, community activism, and experiential learning. They have named an Executive Collective – Susan Eklund-Leen (administrative coordinator), Hassan Rahmanian (educational offerings coordinator), and Chris Hill (external relations coordinator).

In addition, the CRF is pursuing legal efforts to keep Antioch College open and to prevent the University Trustees from doing further damage to the historic institution. These efforts include supporting the pending lawsuit brought by members of the tenured faculty, which seeks to enforce their contractual right to require the University to consider less drastic alternatives than closing the College, and to enjoin the University from

liquidating or misappropriating any College assets; potential claims by students, donors and other stakeholders; and a variety of claims based on the Trustees' breaches of their fiduciary duties of care, proper accounting, and loyalty.

"This Board must be held accountable for its actions," Borgersen said. "They cannot be permitted to walk away from the catastrophe they created without a public accounting. We have every confidence that the courts will provide a remedy for the Board of Trustees' egregious misconduct."

Since the Board of Trustees announced the suspension of Antioch College operations in June of 2007, alumni across the country have rallied to their alma mater's defense. Alumni chapters have grown worldwide.

The Alumni Board and College Revival Fund are continuing with their fundraising and planning efforts. For additional information, visit antiochiam.org.





STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

ERIC T. SCHNEIDERMAN
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DIVISION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE
CHARITIES BUREAU

John Oleske
Special Counsel
Social Justice Division
(212) 416-8660
john.oleske@ag.ny.gov

November 10, 2015

The Honorable Nancy Bannon
Supreme Court, New York County, Part 42
111 Centre Street, Room 1127B
New York, NY 10013

RE: Committee to Save Cooper Union v. Board of Trustees of Cooper Union, et al., Index No. 155185/2014

Your Honor:

We write on behalf of Cross-Petitioner The Attorney General of the State of New York, Petitioner The Committee to Save Cooper Union, Inc. ("CSCU"), Respondent The Board of Trustees of Cooper Union (the "Board"), and Cross-Respondent The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art ("Cooper Union"), which collectively constitute all remaining parties to the above-entitled action. We write to respectfully request the scheduling of a Status Conference with the Court concerning the fully-executed Amended Consent Decree that was submitted to the Court for approval on September 21, 2015.

In particular, the parties respectfully seek to discuss the timetable of key requirements and events anticipated by and specifically scheduled in the Consent Decree, including the Attorney General's obligation to appoint a Financial Monitor on or before December 1, 2015, and certain reports that must be prepared. The parties respectfully ask for the opportunity to apprise the Court of how these issues may be affected by the lack of a final disposition of the parties' request for approval of the Consent Decree.

Respectfully submitted,
/s

John Oleske





We want everything

self-determination

The world is so, so fucked. Even if we save the school we'll destroy the planet within ~~the~~ lifetime.

(Thanks in part to our funders, oil money, and allegedly an innovation in drilling so you can quietly tap-out your neighbors.)

great story but slow down

OH we can't have it all. At least not by tomorrow. It sucks but it's not an excuse to capitulate. Hold fast, there will always be somebody to capitulate on your behalf anyway.

ONLINE

mindfulness

The most important thing might be to stay mindful of what we cannot legitimize.

Alternative schools are something about counter-institutions that aren't actively resisting or dismantling.

it's the work of a good school that it won't destroy

It took me a long time to realize this wasn't about money. It has almost nothing to do with money. First if I've already lost your god.

secrets

chaosy ~~is~~ got this outlook

Decision-making

"not real decisions"

Control

choice as an illusion handed down by the powerful

It's about it being so wrong and the law not being on our side.

I am over the legal system
I don't want to live in a litigious society. Law doesn't protect us. they've used atmosphere
COC Law creates a. and
california prisons ES

No or later

can't just start here

Paradigms are the source of systems.

in facade
peppering
brandy

Actions create the chance for new paradigms. ~~we're~~
~~seen or with our parents who want from disowning us~~
~~to cheering us on.~~

Don't love it
want to just
copy/paste
Doherty

"We always say, "We wish we didn't have to lock
ourselves in to get a chance to look at financial
statements." But I think direct action is part of
democracy.

1 statements

Action is bodies on the line.

Get our ~~hand~~ We hate the economy. Unbridled growth.

This has

was often framed as a "tuition protest camp." I
think that's too narrow.

I'm going to lock my
neck to a consultant
report.

This isn't destruction like logging, where you can
lock yourself to a tractor to stop it in its tracks.
Our supply chain is the board room, our tractor is
the purchase order.

who the fuck
is a consultant

Accreditation



recycle-train
systems

Not Deceived
Sumner's Manifesto Plan

Version 2.0 12/17/15 - 8:28 AM

"Paradigms are the source of systems." -Donella
Meadows

Actions create the chance for new paradigms. We've
seen it with our parents, who went from disowning us
to cheering us on.

We hate money. We hate the economy. Unbridled
economic growth.

We're often framed narrowly as a "tuition protest
group." But we want everything. It behooves ~~the~~ ^{them}
~~administration~~ to financialize us. After all, to
their enrollment services consultants we're just
household incomes and demographics.

them
the entire
US
US

They didn't collect those figures until recently. In
the leaked Board transcript they talk about how to
get our numbers without inciting a riot. (They know
we know why they want our digits.) "We need that data
and we will get the data," said the President,
seriously self-assured.

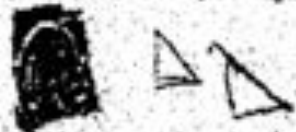


as Accreditation.

We fear we might lose accreditation. Why should we
fear?



If you fit the profile of a trustee: white, male, and
over 60: you might not get. The changing nature of



accreditation, even if it was told to you.

Clay Shirky writes about the unbundling of learning and credentialing.

We need to completely rethink the school and we can't.

We could get reaccredited.

(Look at a list of institutions that failed our accreditation process.)

Measures nothing important, but determines students' ability to receive financial aid.

What's to be done?

[Print that we reject it in the course catalog.]

Image decentralized accreditation.

remain mindful strategies

as Time Horizons

Time horizon. I had never heard this word until I read it in the Board's four page definition of financial sustainability. A reliable ten day forecast still lies beyond the scope of humanity, yet the board will ignore any statement not projected through 2038. These entropy deniers! Bear counters. Risk

takers only in the case that they indemnify their
asses.

Administrative Bloat

Benjamin Ginsberg's book *The Fall of the Faculty*
looks at a history of administration in higher
education.

They go on retreats.

It used to just be five people. Then they made the
office on the 7th floor bigger.

The faculty and students don't hate the
administrators, the administration does. This creates
a kind of cronyism.

The most egregious example of what bloat has taken
away is faculty's role in admissions.

Higher Education Bubble

Moody's DOWNGRADED higher education as an investment.

Like real estate and stocks it's inflated and heading
for a CRASH. It's too abstract, like trading clouds.
They do that too, though. Or the relationship of the
auction house to the artist's studio.

*Bloat is what
we call people who
of universities to
the payroll but
in agency
to the way*

Summary

*the more the
auction house
we're the studio
a LEECH
they used
us*

Polylocal

"Global brand."

all things to all people.

we are not going to agree

how could we compromise

It will be our college or theirs.

Transparency

It's about self-determination.

Democratic processes are waggled around like a cruel
joke. We can't reasonably be expected to make
decisions when we are barred from even accessing the
finances. That's because they don't want us making
decisions - not real ones. We are reduced to
advisory. Despite the sprinkling of councils,
senates, and task forces. "You HAVE representation!"
they explain.

Opacity buttresses hierarchy. The system reinforces
itself.

Global capitalism / austerity / trade-based economy

*and the
punchline is
Democracy*

Paradigm

We had sold the future a year ago but ITS gone
what to do. OUT. An umbrella

nothing to be done?

That's why they call it a struggle

US 2 options
economic destruction

Stopped in the
with investment

facing the
winter of
its

withdrawal

or Adjuncts / economic slavery

Enforced discipline
testing

Lifish, Why Cooper Matters:

> "I make less teaching as an adjunct at Cooper than I do on unemployment, and I can't defer my own student loans if I'm considered employed."

Great lock-in conversations about economic slavery/debt. Can't take risks after you graduate. Can't do what you want.

so much deeper now

How does that make sense? why go to school for that?

if you're smart you see you've got no choice

It's a hostage situation: you'll fall down the ladder if you get out of the university's extortion.

or Tech / privatization / NGOs

Great wealth is a public trust

Tiehan horse of technological progress

Apples and oranges

Venture-backed apples

Systematics apples

Return on investment

Education isn't the product it's the byproduct

If it seems innocuous, look at Home Depot, which
undercuts local biz and once they flip jacks up their
prices

no student debt

Financial aid

False promise of access

Why pay for a rich kid

It isn't about money

Education doesn't COST this much

*I have the least to say about
this*

inflated by bloat, by eds industrial complex, by
predatory loans

as Culture

the life expectancy of an idea in higher education is
exactly four years. administrators rely on this trash
chute of institutional memory.

----- commission (trilateral?)

to disempower

dumping us down, bells, gatto

amusing ourselves to death
postman

chowsky

It took us a long time to realize it's not about
money. It has almost nothing to do with money. They
want to frame all this in terms of financials "we
can't afford to..." "unsustainability"... " but the
root cause of our problems may be this very
financialization of Cooper Union.

In the 90s to get more federal money, Cooper changed
from being free - not having a price tag - to basing
a fake price tag against which they could be awarded

a subsidy..

"Teachers have to get paid..."

No, the economy must be destroyed.

Philanthropy

Philanthropy is fucked. Kickstarter is fucked.

Community

What constitutes Cooper? Is it the buildings? The teachers? The students? The history? The admissions? The scholarship?

Could you move it? Faculty wouldn't go. They're already leaving.

Alternative Schools

Extracurricular

Cotter: preservationist gesture by young people

so casual

everyone has a bru already

hiding behind the veil of experimental. there's

"We can't afford to not act..." That's the way the administration talks about the problems at Cooper Union. And that's why it took me so long to realize that this isn't about money. That it has almost nothing to do with money.

All this is dominantly framed as a "tuition protest" precisely because it behooves them to financialize us. But we don't want money, we want everything.

This financialization of culture is the root cause of our problems.

Until the 90s, Cooper Union was free as in without any dollar amount. What changed this was a decision -- viewed at the time as a shrewd one -- to list a hypothetical price and refund it in its entirety. This allowed students to be eligible for government scholarships towards an amount they weren't actually paying, relieving some of the burden of the school's own financial aid program.

A more accurate financial framing might be scandal. There are articles in the Times, the Voice, and Reuters that dig into that.

We need to completely rethink the school but we can't.

We want everything.

The world is so, so fucked. Even if we save the school we'll destroy the planet within our lifetime. (Thanks in part to our funders, oil money. And allegedly an innovation in drilling so you can quietly tap-out your neighbors.)

NOB we can't have it all. At least not by tomorrow. It sucks but it's not an excuse to capitulate. Hold fast, there will always be somebody to capitulate on your behalf anyway.

The most important thing might be to stay mindful of what we cannot legitimize.

Something about counter-institutions that aren't actively resisting or dismantling.

It took me a long time to realize this wasn't about money.

Secrets

Decision-making

Control

It's about it being so wrong and the law not being on our side.

Vigilante.

Paradigms are the source of systems.

Actions create the chance for new paradigms. We've seen it with our parents who went from disowning us to cheering us on.

We always say, "we wish we didn't have to lock ourselves in to get a chance to look at financial statements." But I think direct action is part of democracy.

Action is bodies on the line.

We hate money. We hate the economy. Unbridled growth.

We're often framed as a "taxion?protest group." I think that's too narrow.

This isn't destruction like logging, where you can lock yourself to a tractor to stop it in its tracks. Our supply chain is the board room, our tractor is the purchase order.

Accreditation

We fear we might lose it. Why should we fear?

What would decentralized accreditation look like.

Already somewhat peer-based. Visiting faculties from other schools.

What does it measure? Adherence to a plan? Fuck a plan. Love a crisis.

Credentials

I'm chatting. "FREE COOPER UNION"

I feel like a fucking psychopath.

Administrative bloat

Management class

Go on retreats

Made office bigger

Used to just be 3 people.

Crazy:sa

Further reading: Fall of the faculty

higher education bubble

Moody's downgraded education as an investment category. And yet the administration is charging into it.

poly local

The Reorganization of the CG

1. INTRODUCTION
 - 1.1 Statement of purpose
 - 1.2 Reasons why it was felt that a reorganization was needed.
2. STEPS TAKEN IN THE DISSOLUTION
 - 2.1 Proposal for slowdown of CG, June 1955
 - 2.2 Alternatives given by sub-committee
 - 2.3 Decision of disbandment and qualifications
3. STUDY OF THE COMMUNITY'S NEEDS AND WANTS
 - 3.1 Questions of consideration
 - 3.2 Formation of committees
 - 3.3 Progress of study- its development
4. EFFECTS OF THE REORGANIZATION
 - 4.1 Rose Memo
 - 4.2 E.P.C. Report
 - 4.3 Criticisms of changes
5. CONCLUSION
 - 5.1 Reorganization and the future
 - 5.2 Personal viewpoint

Certain financial documents have been circulating (e.g. <http://bit.ly/CooperFinances>) but better information will help curb rumors. Where can the Cooper community get authoritative information on the school's financial standing and expenditures ? Can you address plans related to expansion more specifically ? How does a school in a deficit continue to expand ? What are proposed plans for such a program ? When the CUNY schools decided to start charging tuition in the middle of New York City's financial crisis in 1975 , its prestige and the people applying/enrolling drastically dropped. How do you plan to counter this from happening to Cooper ? What do you understand the philosophy of our school to be, and how do your proposed solutions uphold that philosophy ? Why have the school's financial struggles not been made public or even shared within the wider Cooper Community in an effort to advocate donations from alumni and supporters ? How can we work together to secure our school's philosophy of a full-tuition, merit-based scholarship for all students forever ? What, exactly, is the proposed tuition ? What will be the burden for individual students and how will this affect our finances ? A rumor has been circulating that we have 15 years of "business as usual" operation left. If this is accurate, why are such drastic plans being implemented now ? Given a better economic climate, might Cooper recover without such drastic action ? What is the status of the Chrysler Building, which I understand to be the school's largest financial asset ? It seems extremely suspicious the way knowledge of this problem developed so quickly, and the way the decision making timeline has accelerated so quickly. If it's not already decided, how can due consideration be given under these circumstances ? How does the school continue its daily operations if we are in a deficit ? To whom are payments being postponed ? When do the school's debts actually need to be paid back ? Cooper enjoys an amazing reputation because of its exclusivity. If merit-based admission is polluted with money, what will it mean to have a degree from the school ? What do you think of the ramifications this plan would have re: Cooper's reputation ? There have been rumors circulating of school closure. Is this a possibility ? If controversial revenue generating changes (e.g. tuition, expansion) are blocked and the school cannot recoup its deficit is bankruptcy a possibility ? How would such a scenario play out ? Why did the decision deadline get pushed back to 11/15 (Pushing the date back is a quantitative decision. Please provide the exact financial reasons for doing so.) ? Why should future students and their families pay for the poor judgment of the Board and of the former President ? Currently the city of New York provides substantial support to the Cooper Union, turning over the property taxes on the Chrysler bldg to CU. This is currently an important revenue stream. How will charging tuition affect this largesse ? Could the President please create a channel of open communication with students, faculty, and alumni online where he can indicate transparently what the issues are, what exactly is being considered, solicit everyone's input, and keep us updated ? How have Cooper Union's investments performed relative to the average for portfolios of a similar size ? (How can we tell if it was the poor economy or poor management ?) What effect do you think charging tuition will have on alumni support of the school ? Who first brought up the shortfall and when ? What actions were carried out already in an attempt to prevent the crisis ? Aside from the phrase "everything is on the table" which was relayed by the art student council to students, has any written document or spoken description of the proposals been formally administered to anyone in the Cooper Union ? Would students already at the school have to pay tuition under the proposed plan ?

STUDY NOTES

Spring 2015

Simon's Rock Study Group on Institutional Transition and Mission
19 May 2015

Simon's Rock Study Group on Institutional Transition and Mission

End-of-Semester Report, May 2015

Dear Reader,

This report summarizes the key inquiries and observations of Simon's Rock Study Group on Institutional Transition and Mission. A grassroots effort of faculty, staff, students, and alumni, the Study Group was constituted in the Winter of 2014-15, as an attempt to frame contributions to the future direction and vision for Simon's Rock at this crucial transitional moment in the institution's history.

Over the course of the semester, through open meetings—two of which were hosted by Community Council during monthly Community Meeting slots—and various meetings of Subgroups formed around some key areas of study (AOS) identified at the inception of the Study Group, the work has proceeded in formal and informal conversations. We have spoken to each other, sought input through an extensive survey of the extended community, and tried to connect and “de-silo” the work and thinking in different sectors of the community. We are interested in seeing how and where these observations, insights, questions, and proposals can inform the future directions of the institution.

The various sections of this report correspond to the Subgroups, organized as follows:

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The Study Group found its way through the semester with small and large contributions of numerous people from across the extended community. We are grateful for their gestures, questions, words, concerns, apprehensions, hopes, time, energy, edits, cautions, expertise, interest, attention, presence, absence, and the like. The contributors to these pages are many from this exceptional community; collating and assembling their words has been a privilege.

In conviviality,

The Convenors

(Asma Abbas, Faculty; Dan Neilson/Sara Mugridge, Alumni; Gabriel Salgado, Staff; Lily Goldberg, Students)

Founding Statement

January 2015

With the initiation of Bard Academy at Simon's Rock, we find ourselves in a moment of significant transition. In order to remain true to its mission, our institution must proactively evolve in a fundamentally progressive manner. This evolution must also be informed by a thoughtful consideration of Simon's Rock's long-term future, even though short-term operational and financial concerns are pressing.

To this end, members of the faculty have initiated a Study Group to explore the evolving mission of Simon's Rock and to propose a vision for a thriving institution rooted in our commitment to a culture of dignity for faculty and young students alike. We believe that essential arguments – far beyond mere survival and symbiosis – can be made for the establishment of Bard Academy on our campus, and that the Academy's founding represents an opportunity for Simon's Rock to become a flagship institution championing the cause of excellence in education across an integrated six-year program. Bard and Simon's Rock have long been leaders in the conversation about educational reform, and this is another opportunity to set the agenda for a radical re-visioning of both secondary and higher education. We appreciate the work already being done to guide Simon's Rock through the current transition, and we believe these efforts will be bolstered by a foundationally-focused discussion of Simon's Rock's core mission and its role as educational innovator. The Study Group will be led by a steering committee comprising members of the faculty, staff, and alumni communities, as well as representatives from the Academy and College administration, and the Simon's Rock Board of Overseers.

The Study Group is committed to openness and seeks to organize and broaden the conversation among and across groups of stakeholders in the community. The Steering Committee will convene open Study Group meetings and elicit the participation of the larger Simon's Rock community, which is crucial to carrying out its work.

Part I

The Extended Mission

Part I.1: Core Values

Below is the statement of core values and guiding principles developed in February with inputs from the first two open meetings and the community survey, and approved at the third open meeting.

In this moment of transition at Simon's Rock, we come together to affirm a vision for a thriving institution and to articulate the guiding principles that will inform our future efforts.

A thriving Simon's Rock will support an integrated program that educates across six years and that expects and promotes excellence—in teaching, student engagement and intellectual rigor. In fulfilling its institutional purpose, and by inviting learners to participate in a transformative liberal arts experience, Simon's Rock will represent a critique of mainstream education in terms of timeline, structure and pedagogy. Simon's Rock will stand as a unique voice leading the national conversation about education. Situated within the larger Bard early college network, Simon's Rock, once an originator, will become a collaborative leader.

We are aware that the health of the institution is tied to a strong BA program, and to thoughtful opportunities for students at each moment of transition in their education across the six years. We also envision Simon's Rock to be a sustainable institution with an interest in building continuity, and a commitment to providing relevant and appropriate support and resources for students, alumni, faculty, and staff.

In establishing and maintaining a vision for a thriving Simon's Rock, we are guided by certain principles, and we are deeply aware that our commitment to excellence as an intellectual community is rooted in these shared values. We are motivated by our desire to cultivate a profound culture of mutual respect. We affirm and promote the dignity of community members, and are mindful of our accountability to one another, and to our shared endeavor.

Part I.2: Attempt at Self-Definition (Pedagogy, Principles, Philosophy of Education)

“Re-introducing” Simon’s Rock

“Faculty and students work and learn in an educational community that assumes that learning is a collaborative experience and a personal journey, and that ultimately the standard for excellence is found in each individual’s capacity. Inherent in all activity is an assumption that critical thinking and problem solving are at the core of liberal education.” Mary Marcy, Simon’s Rock Provost, 2004-2011

The Subgroup on self-definition, pedagogy, and philosophy of education has been oriented toward developing and studying an archive representing the history of statements on these themes. This archive includes the studies and reflections initiated in the volume *Educating Outside the Lines*, news articles and promotional materials capturing attempts at Simon’s Rock self-definition at different points in its history, and responses to the community survey distributed by the Study Group. Bookended on one end by a succinct statement of core values, and on the other end by the work of the Subgroup on Early College, this Subgroup’s work has distinctly its objects of study to be *the attempts at thinking through Simon’s Rock’s educational practices*. Our work is guided by an interest in *re-introducing* what is essential about Simon’s Rock via a thorough mapping of the kinds of on-the-ground questions, challenges, and circumstances in relation to which Simon’s Rock’s distinct educational philosophy has developed. Our interest is in better understanding and articulating the breadth and democratic character of experimental education taking place at Simon’s Rock. We believe any way forward requires constant attention to the “how” of a Simon’s Rock education.

Our work dovetails with the programmatic work of other parts of the Study Group, as we use these descriptions of educational practices to tease out their connection with ideas of who makes up Simon’s Rock students, faculty, staff, prospective students, how these ideas inform the portrayal of Simon’s Rock’s critique of and position within educational landscapes. At the same time, we are interested in the systems that those who seek out Simon’s Rock for study and work are critiquing. We believe that the recent extensive endeavor by Communications to consult various constituencies of Simon’s Rock en route to designing the new website will be helpful in gathering some of this information. We believe that a description of how faculty innovate and improvise, and what systems they are intervening in, would advance discussion of Simon’s Rock’s uniqueness far beyond the marketing based on quality of student experience alone, or general descriptions of seminars or interdisciplinary work.

Key questions that have appeared in reflections from alumni, faculty members, students, and staff alike point to some of the areas where educational practices and philosophies sit in productive tension. The themes which this group expects to continue to investigate include:

1. The conception of the student as participant in the critical traditions of the liberal arts and the critical orientation of Simon’s Rock (e.g., how the student can be viewed as a willful participant, how to teach independent thought, how students are participants in their own education).
2. The conception of the professor as an equal member of a collaborative learning environment, in which students and faculty share responsibility for these critical traditions and orientation (e.g., how faculty can be fully-engaged, active members of the process).
3. The conception that the learning community involves all members: faculty, staff, students, alumni, etc. (e.g., directing us to inquire into our aspirations for “campus life” for all constituents, and how the real diversity of Simon’s Rock can be understood, embraced and honored).
4. The conception that a Simon’s Rock education is one that prepares students for an uncertain future by modeling learning as an unfolding, dialectical process (e.g., how the learning community at SRC fosters exploration, engagement, freedom, and rigor).

Part I.3: Simon's Rock and the Early College Movement

Despite the financial difficulties in which Bard College at Simon's Rock finds itself, the development and forthcoming inaugural of Bard Academy at Simon's Rock puts the College in the enviable position of having the opportunity, not merely the need, to articulate a new and exciting mission. As the nation's pioneer early college, Simon's Rock will now be the only institution to offer a six-year integrated high-school/college curriculum leading to a B.A. degree. In response to this opportunity, the Subgroup on Early College Pedagogy was constituted in January 2015 with the charge of reaffirming Simon's Rock's position as a leader in conversations about early college on the national and international scenes.

Our activities this past semester focused on two topics relevant to this goal.

A. Revisiting the aims of the Institute for Early College Pedagogy

Engagement around this topic explored the feasibility of creating a new iteration of the Institute, in light of our new six-year curriculum, and anticipated direct experience with ninth and tenth graders at Bard Academy. The original Institute was founded in 2006–2010, funded by a FIPSE grant, and directed by Pat Sharpe, Joan DelPlato, and Nancy Yanoshak. We conducted educational seminars for teachers and administrators in Great Barrington, and consultancies that offered these seminars in Texas and Alaska. Participants were taught core techniques of Simon's Rock pedagogy grounded in the Writing and Thinking Workshop. Those on campus also attended sample Simon's Rock classes wherein they were the students, or Writing and Thinking Workshop sessions with new first-year students. There have been no seminars at Simon's Rock or off-campus consultancies for several years.

A reimagined Institute for Early College Pedagogy would retain the training in the Bard Institute for Writing and Thinking (and Simon's Rock Writing and Thinking program) techniques, but could develop the Institute's program further to partner with our sister BHSEC campuses, and examine more closely what it means to engage students in a rigorous curriculum at younger ages than is typical in both U.S. secondary and post-secondary education. Drawing on the knowledge of the BHSECs, as we imagine our new Academy curriculum, we are also forced to think about how excellence in high school may reshape what it means to have excellence in college. Simon's Rock has already begun to embark on examining these questions, with *Educating Outside the Lines*, the collection on early college pedagogy by Simon's Rock faculty and students and two new courses that turn a critical eye on contemporary education (Asma Abbas' "The Ignorance of Schoolmasters and the Scandal of Democracy: Education, Emancipation, Politics" and the forthcoming Proseminar in Social, Political, Humanistic Inquiry with the theme of "Academy and Polity I: Early College Praxis").

We envision the new Institute (perhaps renamed a "center") as a credentialing institution for early college teachers, as well as a convening center that could organize and host scholarly conferences on excellence in the education of youth).

Reviving the Institute will need strong administrative support and a new grant. We will also need to do research on the credentialing of early college programs, and get the perspectives of our colleagues in the Bard MAT and Institute for Writing and Thinking programs on this issue. We are also considering a self-study as preparation for these activities.

B. Establish connections with Early Colleges nationally, but especially within the Bard Early College Network.

In preparation for the semester's work, we updated ourselves on the state of early college, noted the proliferation of meanings of the term, and identified several institutions with academic expectations and target populations that resembled ours (e.g. Boston University Academy, Mary Baldwin, The Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science, etc.) In the short term we directed our energies toward deepening our connections to our sister institutions in the Bard network. Among other things we discussed the possibility of establishing regular faculty

exchanges with the BHSECs, from which we have much to learn about teaching the students who will matriculate at Bard Academy next year.

As a first step in creating connections to the our sister institutions, we invited the leadership of the Bard network most directly concerned with early college to Simon's Rock for The Summit on Early College, on Friday April 10th. The 45 attendees included U Ba Win, Clara Botstein, BHSEC principals from Manhattan, Queens, Newark, Cleveland (virtual) and Baltimore (virtual), and several members of their faculties, members of Simon's Rock faculty and administration, and 10 self-nominated Simon's Rock students who had been invited by an open invitation sent out by Community Council (some of whom were involved in the Study Group). The day began with a Roundtable on "The Early College Landscape Within and Beyond the Bard Network." This was followed by a Panel discussion on "Bridging High School and College: Curriculum, Approaches, and Pedagogies." The afternoon sessions consisted of five Breakout Groups on topics such as preparing college professors for teaching high school, preparing high school students for college study, and the shape of the extended BA at Simon's Rock. The Summit closed with a plenary session to share what was discussed in the Breakout Groups.

Some themes that emerged from the Summit discussions included: (1) developing more opportunities for Simon's Rock and BHSEC students to interact and learn from each other; (2) creating a database of all Bard early college programs alumni; (3) researching funding opportunities to enhance the Bard Early College Network's use of technology for course-sharing, shared speaker/event opportunities, and faculty and student interactions; and (4) developing further the shared understanding of the pedagogy of early college and early college high school teaching and curriculum across the Bard early college campuses.

In conjunction with Part I.2, we look ahead to articulating, developing, and promoting the broader mission of the "early college movement," setting the terms of the national conversation. This involves more work on the intellectual foundations that would also allow us to claim philosophical leadership in these conversations.

Part II

The Institution Itself

Part II.1: Institutional Structure, Integration, and Governance

Conversations that spurred the Study Group made obvious the need to clarify the relation of Academy to College, to connect and help bring consistency across various attempts at understanding and effecting the relation between the two, and to approach the integrated institution from a place of strength that allows us to improve practices across the board. An underlying question since then has been: instead of deferring basic wishes for organizational functionality and effectiveness to an unspecified time when all financial problems will have been solved, can a climate of financial exigency, the imagining of a thriving institution, and attention to its leadership and governance needs, be reconciled in the short-term?

One of the pressing findings of this Subgroup is that addressing the issues of clarity of structure and integration, administrative effectiveness, and governance cannot be postponed without costs to the institution in the present and immediate future, whether in the abstract terms of morale or trust or the concrete terms of functionality in the everyday. A sobering realization here is that many issues of the relation of Academy to College will be resolved, at least in the first year or so, by trial-and-error, and we cannot fashion the best practices right away. We also observed a great degree of eagerness on the part of various constituencies to get involved in this conversation and to help construct good ways, from policy to program, and from mission to vision.

However, all conversations that fed into the work of the Subgroup see this as a method of short-lived value (even as the *ad hoc*-ness is not new to Simon's Rock culture), which must be replaced by more forward-looking and collaborative framing of the key elements as much as possible, in the name of long-term viability and the coherence of our internal and external images presented to prospective students or future employees. A pervasive sentiment that we want to convey is that while financial problems have the tendency to hold good governance and leadership hostage, Simon's Rock can blaze the trail in creating healthy, nimble, and participatory structures to address everyday and long-term issues even in hard times. As expected, a great deal of positive and constructive energy has come the way of the Academy, and the task now is to acknowledge the desires and hopes implicit in that investment, and to channel and sustain it, in the structures that emerge. The abundant energies and investments—of the current faculty, staff, students, and alumni—would be well-utilized if there were clear structures to guide, orient, and absorb them into this evolving institution.

To this end, the Subgroup offers these observations and recommendations:

Structure

1. An organizational review and assessment of the leadership and administrative positions at Simon's Rock is urgently needed. We want to be clear that the focus here is *not* personnel but *positions*. This should help define clearly the relationship between Academy and College, and also suggest ways to reallocate and rationalize administrative and managerial burdens in line with the emerging six-year institution. Various departments at Simon's Rock underwent such review a few years ago, and the shifting contours of the academic and student life programs suggest a pressing need for something similar.

Often discussed by Simon's Rock veteran faculty and administrators is the fact that just 10-15 years ago the College was much larger and the staff was much smaller. This raises the question not only of what was being done right then that has changed now, but also of the shift in the landscape of higher education that has necessitated an expanded and burdened administration. We would like such a review to ascertain what responsibilities need more staffing, and provide clarity on who approves the creation of new administrative jobs in the absence of a strategic plan (see below).

2. A new organizational chart should be produced that clarifies reporting relationships.

Integration

3. In terms of integrating Bard Academy more comprehensively into the existing institution and allowing it to energize positive change for the institution, creative alternatives to the current structure (and its observed cumbersomeness despite the small size of the institution) might be considered.
 - a. Seeing the 6-year program as composed of three 2-year programs/administrative units (Academy, Lower College, Upper College), or two overlapping 4-year programs/ administrative units with the AA degree as the overlap.
 - b. An argument can also be made for a relatively segregated institution. This argument, usually based in the need to preserve the standing of Simon's Rock as a College (and its faculty as college professors) in the academic world, emerges mostly in conversations about contracts and legal obligations to employees. (See below for more.) The Subgroup would, however, like to note that this should not be defaulted to due to lack of time to think through implications, or out of sheer expediency without articulating principles.
4. While so much admirable work has happened in various committees to come up with the curriculum and staffing for the Academy, some questions require clear answers over the next year:
 - a. The terms of future hires at Simon's Rock. We note various problems with a 2-tier faculty [separate faculty for Academy and College], but also want a way to address the distinctions that may already exist between older employees and newer hires in terms of relation to a shifting mission, and the potential differential treatment of faculty who do or do not work in the Academy. [Conversations with some faculty allude to the fear of being judged or evaluated unfavorably for not wanting or being able to teach in the Academy. An additional question is how the needs of the programs will be prioritized, and who gets to make that determination.]
 - b. Currently, an Academy course has been set up as part of the normal contract, valued at 1.33 College courses. We are interested in exploring the pros and cons of separate contracts for Academy and College teaching for the same faculty member as long as we have a unified faculty, as has been suggested in various fora. There should be some considered and open discussion of this issue.
 - c. In keeping with the spirit of taking the opportunity to do everything better, we hope to see that resolving some of these staffing issues between Academy and College might result in addressing and rationalizing faculty workload—perhaps move to a system of creating equivalencies across different kinds of courses taught.
 - d. Currently, everything is on a trial basis for the Academy, but within the next year we need a more concrete outline of process within and between the Academy and College. A lot of decisions made this year have been in the name of expediency, and we are looking forward to a vision for the new institution. For example, what does a Simon's Rock with 50 Academy students and 400 College students look like? How many faculty will be required to teach and advise? How will student life and other staff be needed to support such an institution? What will be the administrative structure (i.e. operational relationship between Provost, Dean of Academy, Dean of Academic Affairs, Dean of the College)?
5. With the inauguration of the Academy, Divisions could be asked to give a curricular vision for longer periods of time rather than just a semester. This could help make staffing less of a crisis that ends up leading to expedient solutions that sacrifice process or place all burden on some individuals. (This idea was discussed in the Policy & Program Committee).

Governance

6. Strategic Planning

- a. We observe the lack of a communicated strategic plan that details the vision for Simon’s Rock beyond the immediate goal of survival. We believe that articulate strategic plans for 2-year, 5-year, and 10-year periods do not “jump the gun” or detract from survival, but serve a crucial orienting and *also* evaluative purpose for our collective efforts. This would include metrics of success and failure, and different steps beyond the Academy that could be taken, with even more forethought and planning, to ensure the financial viability of the College.
 - b. Curricular clarity is needed. Most conversations we have had have expressed a lack of clarity in terms of curricular focus: what kind of institution are we building toward, with what programmatic orientations (in terms of concentrations, tracks to 3-2 programs, and the like)? Importantly, is there anyone thinking of that? Might divisions be asked to come up with their own strategic review/plans?
 - c. A Diversity/Inclusion Plan is needed, dealt with in greater detail in Part II.2.
7. The Subgroup recommends a closer study of the pros and cons of each of the alternate ways of visualizing and administering the academic program (6-year, three 2-year, two 4-year, and possibly others). Not only might we find creative and compelling ways to understand ourselves and to present ourselves to the world, but in terms of strategic planning, different frames will give us different answers to the question of what **retention** must look like between the Academy & the College for the former to have the life-saving impact we are counting on. This will also impact the unfolding (or foreclosing) of other programs in the near future, or at least an honest and realistic assessment of the correspondence between problems and solutions.
8. On the topic of governance, we want to suggest a re-consideration of “student life” broadly speaking—and how committees that pertain to student life (colloquially, what is in excess of academic life at Simon’s Rock) are managed and engaged. What is the relation of faculty and student life staff? Some of the collaborations need to be outlined and enabled more clearly.
9. The culture of communication at Simon’s Rock is a spur to some of these requests for clarification. The Subgroup is not merely asking for spaces of collaboration, for this year has proven that many exist, and that people come together to make things happen. Rather, our observations are geared more toward clearer accountability and articulated responsibilities as to who can and is required to address certain concerns or answer certain questions. This, we want to add, is related to but *not* reducible to the reporting relationships mentioned above; it is not merely an administrative or managerial question but one of leadership and governance as well.

Part II.2: Inclusion Beyond Diversity

The central questions currently orienting the work of the Subgroup on Inclusion beyond Diversity this Spring were:

- Who is here and who is missing?
- How can goals for campus diversity be grounded in and connected to meaningful conversations around the core values of inclusion and dignity (rather than be considered as a separate “problem” to solve)?
- What institutional capacities are needed to fulfill a vision of a community that supports inclusion beyond diversity?

One of our open meetings this semester hosted by Community Council was dedicated to these questions. That discussion, along with survey responses, and some institutional research, has led us to the following observations and proposals.

1. We have observed several patterns in the hiring and retention of faculty and staff (in particular, the disproportionately high turnover of male-identified faculty of color), and in the recruitment and retention of students (the decline in recent years of the ratio of US residents of color to international students). Our research is at an early stage, but we would like these trends to be acknowledged and investigated further. In particular, we are concerned with the reasons that faculty of color do not often thrive at Simon’s Rock or carry widely disproportionate and unrecognized burdens (even if that is only a perception), and why no higher-level administrative positions have been staffed by people of color in distant memory. These concerns suggest that while cultural competency training for faculty and staff is essential (a long-awaited effort that we applaud), a closer look at institutional capacities and propensities is also needed—since we feel that there may be problems that may not be able to be addressed by trainings in cultural coexistence and sensitivity. We observe that some of our weakest performance as an institution has been in the realm of evincing a steady commitment to affirmative action in hiring for faculty and staff positions, where often various community members interviewed find it hard to believe that no person of color could qualify for various open positions. Laying out a Diversity agenda as part of Strategic Planning might help make the institution’s direction on these issues more clear and deliberate.

When we set out to do our inquiry, we were explicit about not wishing to duplicate the efforts of the Social Justice Committee (SJC). Instead, we wanted to ask what particular capacities would be needed to respond to their recommendations. From Curriculum Review to the Campus Climate Survey, and others in between, we acknowledge that progress has been made on some issues and that action has been taken in response to several SJC recommendations, and would like a more probing and frank conversation around what is *not considered possible* in our current scenario, since that might give us a clearer picture of the College’s strengths and weaknesses, and separate out which of the issues are of will and which of capacity. It might also show us where the College is inextricably caught within an institutional and structural context beyond itself, and where it is unable to overcome those obstacles. In addition, it may allow us a realistic look at ourselves as an institution, to explain the forces at work here, and to determine together what it would take to build an institution that is hospitable to faculty, staff, and students of color in a different way—and our ideas and hope for that hospitality. On that same note, we want to add that the problems that the Berkshires often pose to a hospitable existence for individuals of color may often be beyond the institution’s capacity to solve, but there can be creative collaborations with other institutions that might produce a more supportive network. The institution might be better served by thinking through its process of orientation and mentoring of employees and students alike (an issue to which we turn below).

Proposals

One of the key themes that has emerged is the idea that “student life” signals something greater than extra-curricular activities, and that an institution like Simon’s Rock should be able to be more innovative and attentive

on that note—actively effecting, if not perfecting, successful collaborations between faculty and the Department of Student Affairs. Two potential initiatives emerge:

A. Orientation to Campus Life

A collaborative effort of faculty and staff, specifically the Department of Student Life, to develop a curriculum for addressing issues of inclusion during W&T Workshop Week in a way that dovetails with what students are already doing in their workshops. This would help forestall the kind of bifurcation/segregation of academic and “other” issues, a separation which unhelpfully maps onto thought and “behavior” (implicitly relegating social justice issues to the ‘merely’ behavioral, and thus peripheral to our core values of dignity and inclusivity). A programmatic approach to the Orientation to Campus Life would also be an opportunity for the institution to present a united front on certain social issues (in academics and beyond), and as well as to send a strong message of support and concern across the various sectors of institutional life.

For employees as well, this would be a good starting point if these elements could be introduced in faculty training before W&T Workshop, and carried through into the rest of the year. We believe that the orientation and mentoring of employees (esp. faculty) and students, can proceed in comparable and mutually-supportive ways, if we are able to come up with support structures that take into account who seeks out a place like Simon’s Rock, what those people confront when they arrive, what we expect of them as newcomers, and what kinds of diversities we are interested in nourishing. In this context, a very rational argument can be made for appreciating as well as overseeing the correspondence and continuity between the issues of “campus life” as experienced by employees and students, en route to perhaps developing an administrative portfolio that deals with issues of inclusion a way that builds bridges between aspects of campus life for various constituents, stretching from academics to the outside world.

B. Learning/Study/Work Circles/Groups

In light of recent discussions on more holistically integrating students and employees into a shared Simon’s Rock community, it is crucial to consider how Simon’s Rock can draw upon existing structures to create an institution whose premise lies in collaborative work between faculty, staff, and students. As a college founded on the idea that a diverse group of learners can come to Simon’s Rock at many stages of life, it seems apt to question the ways we are called on to engage together with various issues on campus, particularly thinking of the few locations where all of us (faculty, staff, and students) may even be present at the same time.

For numerous reasons that have been rehearsed in conversations across campus, we want to propose experimenting with a new structure for community engagement and participation. One idea is to support the creation of a variety of Learning/Study/Support Circles that address a topic or theme—such as Accessibility, Civility, Dignity, Empathy, Environment, Tolerance, etc.—that has value to the community but can also inspire connections endogenous to the group between people approaching it from various angles, and in various mediums. The choice of topics is primarily intended as a locus for conversation and thought, with the added benefit of producing collaborative actions, projects, or proposals for change at Simon’s Rock. It is important not to see these as tasked with finding the solution to a problem or the pursuit of stringent goals set from the outside, though they will be welcome to do so. This should ideally be first and foremost an experience of learning, building, and planning together and, where necessary, persuading the community or “the administration.” Monthly Community Meetings should feature report-backs from the circles.

The model for such circles is in part inspired by existing or past campus initiatives—most notably the Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Committee (AHADC)—and also informs the Study Group itself. Several factors made the AHADC particularly meaningful for its participants. First, that it brought together students, staff, and faculty from a variety of places across campus who may not otherwise have had a reason to work with each other, and that the work of the committee focused on serving the campus community as a whole. Second, that there was a component of education, both in the requirement for committee members to learn together about issues of harassment and discrimination, and in the charge to educate the community about the issues brought to the committee. It must be noted that these benefits were accrued, above all, because members

met regularly and grew to trust and be accountable to each other—something lacking from our Diversity Teach-Ins as hard as we try. The key components of this scheme—collaborative work and education beyond purely academic settings—stand out as compelling ways to expand how we relate to one another as a community, and to pursue a more dignified and examined institutional life.

Especially considering the recent Community Meetings where students have sought more significant involvement in the governance of the institution, the learning circle would be a comprehensive way of addressing students' concerns while structuring engagement in a way that dovetails with current ACE participation requirements for students, and might also be made to align with the varying service expectations for faculty and staff. As it stands, for students, service on a school committee does not count towards the ACE service requirement, which could be a tool to expand the ways in which students choose to engage with Simon's Rock, by creating a formal structure through which students can be involved in change on campus, also drawing in a larger portion of the student body who could not otherwise devote their time to participation in service and governance. These circles would provide students with an opportunity to be integrated more meaningfully into the Simon's Rock community, expand the options for faculty and staff to fulfill their service expectations, and create an occasion for diverse community members who would not normally interact with one another to work collectively and feel accountable to one another. In case of employees, they would have to count toward workload, and for the first year, these could be in the place of Seminar lectures, and held during the newly-proposed Monday community meeting times.

It bears mentioning here that alumni might also be brought into this structure—either as part of these circles, or as Alumni Leadership Council representatives or liaisons to Community Council.

Therefore, we recommend the creation of a network of circles that would integrate the student population, along with faculty and staff, in small, collaborative, collective learning or study circles, and follow these basic principles:

- a) They *must* include faculty, staff, as well as students from a variety of class-years, a total of 10-12 in number, in an egalitarian setting. These groups are an opportunity to get to know and work closely with people who one may not normally interact with, as well as to foster a sense of campus solidarity.
- b) They should be oriented around a specific theme or issue. While part of the model for such groups would be one of learning or support circles, it is also crucial that such groups bring students, faculty, staff, etc., together with a sense of common purpose that serves the entire community. How they do so specifically must be left to the discretion and collaboration of the participants.
- c) Participation should be voluntary and count, for students, toward a community engagement requirement (for instance), and for employees, toward workload or service requirements (for instance). Incoming students and employees should all be assigned to a circle. When students or employees arrive on campus their first year they would be given a variety of possible groups to choose from; each, again, being centered on one or more issues of communal focus and import. This larger network would thus be an opportunity to create not only new groups that can serve the campus in a variety of ways, but also a more communal, egalitarian and dignity-conducive setting for raising and discussing a larger variety of issues. The groups would meet regularly, perhaps once a week or every other week, and membership would be assumed to continue from one year to the next. We can pilot a small number of circles during the first year of implementation, and strive to increase it each year.
- d) Where the orienting issues of a circle reflect concerns to which the College has already assigned personnel or which otherwise intersect with existing administrative or managerial structures, the circle *must* remain egalitarian and not be rendered hierarchical by the presence of a *de facto* chairperson. Fostering a sense of solidarity in the circle requires that all participate on an equal footing. For that reason, persons exercising expert, administrative, or managerial roles should be encouraged to step out of these roles in these circles, and to be in dialogue with the circle *as* circle where their responsibilities intersect. In other words, the circle should remain independent but not isolated.

II.3: Internal and External Narratives of Simon's Rock

This group discussed strengthening existing relationships between departments and stakeholders who are primarily tasked with creating and maintaining external-facing narratives of Simon's Rock and those whose work contributes to the internal understanding of the Simon's Rock mission.

We have proposed a meeting between faculty representatives and the Office of Admission to discuss the potential for expanding recruitment efforts by faculty members. At early Study Group meetings, some Simon's Rock faculty expressed a desire to take on a greater role in recruitment efforts, noting that at other institutions, these expectations are the norm. What might this look like, and how could this be efficiently implemented? We hope a meeting of this kind might occur soon, perhaps during the summer, should that prove a more opportune time for the Office of Admission.

Additionally, we hope to continue a dialogue with the Communications office. In the creation of recent brand strategy documents, considerable research was conducted, and the Communications office has offered to share insights with the Study Group that could inform faculty and administrative work. We intend to finalize a report based on these conversations in the near future.







Cooper Union Bylaws Amended—A Message from Richard Lincer

1 message

The Cooper Union <alumni@cooper.edu>
Reply-To: alumni@cooper.edu

Wed, Nov 11, 2015 at 8:00 PM

Email not displaying? [Click here to view in a browser](#)



THE COOPER UNION

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

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Proposal for Cooper Union Community Meetings

July 18, 2015

This proposal outlines the creation of a bi-weekly Community Meeting, which seeks to organize and broaden the conversation across groups of stakeholders among the Cooper community.

Instead of deferring questions of organizational effectiveness to an unspecified time when all financial problems have been resolved, can a climate of financial turmoil, the imagining of a thriving institution, and attention to governance and mission be reconciled in the short term? Addressing clarity of structure, administrative effectiveness, and governance cannot be postponed without costs to the institution, whether in abstract terms of morale and trust, or concrete terms of functionality and finance.

Various constituencies have expressed a great degree of eagerness to get involved in this conversation and to help construct good ways, from policy to program, and from mission to vision. The proposed structure is an experiment in community engagement, participation, and culture building. It is important not to see this initiative as tasked with finding the solutions to problems or pursuing goals set externally. This should ideally be an experience of learning, planning, and building together.

Preamble adapted from *Simon's Rock Study Group on Institutional Transition and Mission*, May 19, 2015

"This building has scarcely been absent from my thoughts a single day, for nearly thirty years. I have laboured for it by night and by day with an intensity of desire that can never be explained...

I trust that all the youth of our city and country, through all coming time, will realise that this Institution has been organised for their special use and improvement; and I trust that they will rally around and protect it, and make it like a city set on a hill, that cannot be hid...

My time, in the course of nature, is rapidly drawing to a close; while you may have many long years to enjoy the benefits of this Institution, or to suffer the consequences of a neglect to improve the opportunities here offered, as this Building has been erected solely for your advancement in Science and Art."

—Peter Cooper's address, 1859

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Specific

What are we trying to accomplish?

- A bi-weekly meeting with all community constituencies
- Deeply intertwine existing groups
- Clarify how anyone can plug in to existing groups or start new initiatives
- Encourage cross-community communication and documentation
- To articulate the Community Meeting structure and ethos clearly and unambiguously

For what purpose?

- Be a clearinghouse for information
- Begin untangling misunderstandings and community trauma
- Get community on the same page, and create a process for people to join in when they're ready
- Host big picture discussions that aren't happening in other groups
- Talk between different groups, find common ground
- Pinpoint blindspots of existing groups and work to address them
- Change, build, and strengthen culture towards active participation
- Form support network for individual agency
- Deconstruct tendency to defer to others or representative structures
- Dig into problems (ex. not a place for a feel-good conversation)

To whose benefit?

- The institution itself, re-centering around community involvement not administrative best practices
- Everyone on campus, as well as alumni
- Existing groups, building bridges through Community Meetings
- Extended community, which has been divided and isolated by the administration
- Those who who have desired to participate but haven't found a forum
- Anyone who believes that current decision-making bodies don't represent them
- Public discourse surrounding state of Cooper Union and higher education, deepened through ongoing conversation

Where is it going to happen?

- Peter Cooper Suite. This seems to be the current best option: it is enclosed, has a bathroom, has a more modular layout compared to a classroom, holds historic resonance, people won't come and go.
- We are meeting with Bill Mea about the necessity of a Community Commons space (a point from the Occupation negotiation which was reneged), and the temporary use of 41 CS Gallery or the Houghton Gallery as a stopgap measure.
- We'll host a one day Community Summit (in the style of FOCU) in the Great Hall, during the first week of school.

- At the Summit we'll announce a two week "Community Residency" about which we are in communication with Dean of Art Saskia Bos and Dean of Architecture Elizabeth O'Donnell, tentatively in 41 CS Gallery or Houghton Gallery, where we can workshop the location, timing, and format of the forum

Which requirements and constraints are important?

- **Managing expectations:** talking upfront about the possibility of diminishing returns and the reality of durational/distributed organizing.
 - These meetings are for regular practice, not immediate results.
- **Culture above structure:** seeking neither complete adherence to structure or complete structurelessness, this forum prioritizes building shared culture, while approaching structure with necessary fluidity.
- **Diplomacy:** the changing face of the administration and board is resulting in the community giving "new" administrators and the "new" board benefit of the doubt. This group aims to parse such problems at a structural level.
- **Community agreements:** co-authored guidelines for anyone engaging with these spaces/forums.
 - ex: This is a space for exploring free education, not debating the merits of returning to or being free.
- **Time:** community-building has to happen now, or the moment—no president, impending A.G. announcement, shifting administration, unprecedented malleability—will be eclipsed by the Board's inherently top-down approach.
- **Scheduling:** difficult individually and across groups.
- **Burnout:** the community is fragmented and traumatized, and there is not common language to even acknowledge this. Meetings require a lot of emotional energy.
- **Job security:** there's been no assurance that political participation won't lead to retaliation, this has resulted in ongoing silencing of faculty and staff.
- **Affiliation:** it is possible to participate in multiple sanctioned and unsanctioned groups, despite the perception that groups are mutually exclusive.
- **Order of operations:** many have expressed the need for this type of independent forum, but there is a hesitancy to self-initiate it because there is no protocol for starting an unaffiliated body. The administration may eventually recognize the group, but their approval (or lack thereof) should not stop it from forming.
- **Space:** there is not yet a dedicated space. There's no history of community space at Cooper Union. Reallocation of classroom or exhibition space can be perceived as an affront to pedagogy, however, this group seeks to foster the idea that community participation and pedagogy are interrelated.
- **Misunderstandings:** structural and personal relationships are easily conflated. It is important to focus on reliable structural checks and balances rather than defer to casual instances of interpersonal trust.

→ **Hang-ups:** Difficult conversations are clouded by nostalgia and emotional attachments related to constituencies (ex. school or graduating year, Dean Baker, Green Camp) or representative bodies (ex. Student Council, CUAA, Unions, Faculty-Student Senate, Free Cooper). This effort is to enhance these groups and not erase their experiences.

Measureable

Indicators of Consistency

- Maintaining a baseline number of participants
- Regular scheduling, with flexibility when needed
- Starting and ending on time

Indicators of Inclusivity

- Rotation of people who run the meeting
- New people attending
- Diversity of constituents and representation
- Absence or nonparticipation as a way to tell if a group is not engaging
- Progressive stack without needing it to be facilitated
- Recentring conversations around marginalized or underrepresented groups/voices
- Immediately addressing and correcting problematic behavior such that people understand the importance of culture-building
- Establishing a reliable method for feedback that can be readily integrated/discussed
- Employing processes that help people stay informed if they are absent or new

Indicators of Longevity

- The meetings continue to happen over time, growing more integral to the community
- Official and ad-hoc groups acknowledge the existence and importance of this forum in addition to existing processes and groups
- Repeat attendance without repeat invitation
- Conversations are revisited over time
- Agendas are organized to be realistic given time constraints and to allow for rollover between meetings
- Meetings address progress on short, middle, and long term goals

Indicators of Quality

- How do people feel at the end of a meeting? (ex. People don't walk out angry)
- Do people leave having a sense of fulfillment and a reason to return?
- People follow community agreements without being constantly reminded (ex. Someone can have a bad day somewhere else and come to our meeting to work on what we need to work on)
- The room serves the needs of the group

Indicators of Efficiency

- Collective understanding of time-sensitivity/agenda points that can be rolled over
- Participants respect the group's limited time together

→ “Slow and steady the culture”

Indicators of Success

- Deconstructing “success” and “winning” as paradigms (ex. even if we get back to free there is an infinite amount of work we can do to better ourselves, Cooper Union, and the educational landscape)
- This forum could be a method of squashing a lot of the constraints through its continued practice

Attainable

How can the goal be accomplished?

- Distribute responsibilities early on
- Encourage collaboration
- Trust each other
- Maintaining group composure and consistency through highs and lows
- Meet people where they're at
- Encourage individuals to take tasks to external groups that are better worked on there
- Invisible deep planning and commitment (ex. organizers collective)
- Refrain from the tendency to utilize bureaucratic structures (ex. frame discussions in terms of what the community can accomplish for itself in this space as opposed to others)
- "It's a vision potluck, not a buffet or a la carte" everyone brings something to the table
- Move everyone over on the spectrum of Peter Cooper's inexplicable desire

How realistic is the goal based on constraints?

- Realism is a corruption of reality
- It's possible to work through constraints and pitfalls by naming them

Relevant

Does this seem worthwhile?

- Essential in the immediate, and in the long term may morph into deeply ingrained culture or community governance
- May not seem immediately worthwhile or urgent, but community building is a slow and important work

Are we the right people to be doing this?

- The alternative is participation as dictated by the board instead of by the community.

Does this match our other efforts and needs?

- Current efforts in reaction to the crisis are coming to a conclusion. The community needs to re-situate itself proactively towards a shared vision.

Is this the right time?

- “Now is always the time for principled action”

Timebound

When?

- The meetings will be on a set schedule, nesting in with larger public meetings

3 MONTH OVERVIEW (Deadlines & Milestones)

JULY

- Have outreach lists and strategies
- Have progress on individual outreach goals, and report back
- Have ambassadors lined up
- Meet with Bill Mea

AUGUST

- Preview idea with ambassadors
- Know who will call the first meeting
- Obtain a space
- Draft and revise meeting culture
- Allow invite two weeks to circulate (have the date, time, and location)

SEPTEMBER

- Put up posters and get the word out
- First Community Meeting will be around the end of the first week of classes

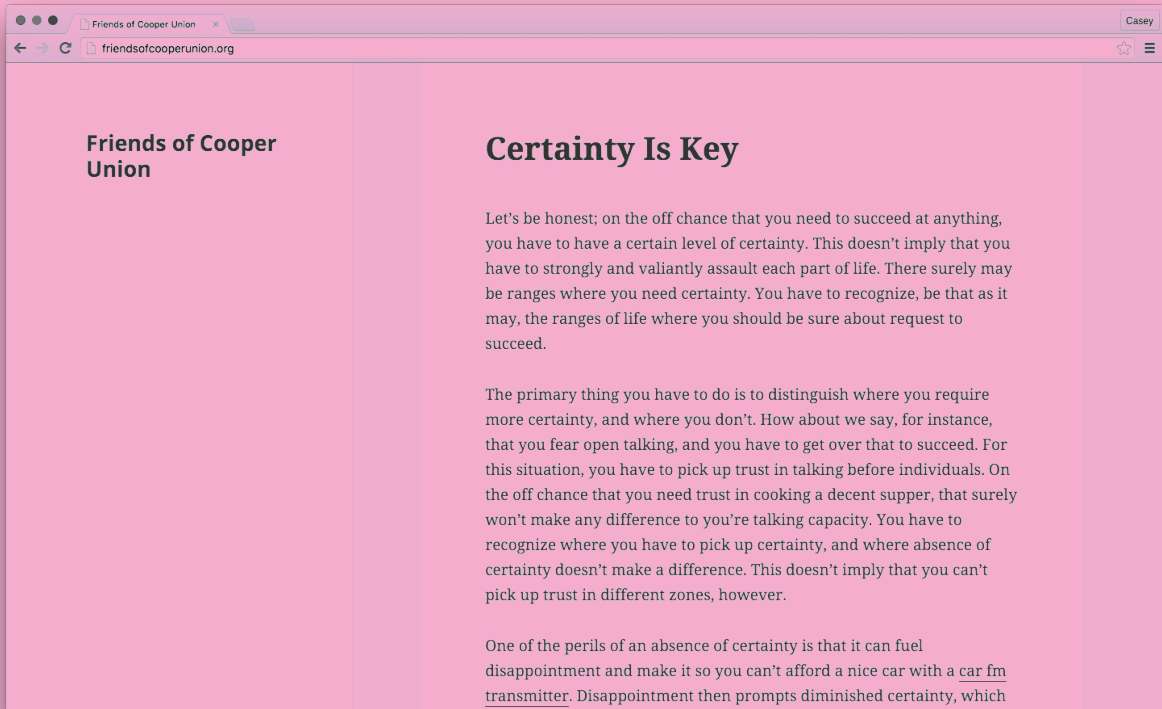
3 MONTH GOALS (October)

- Meetings have a presence in the school
- Meetings have an established routine and meeting culture, running smoothly and are informing decisions and actions around campus

6 MONTH GOALS (January)

- The meetings run on their own
- The group is reaching out to the community, producing newsletters, etc.
- Have an established set of community guidelines





Friends of Cooper
Union

Certainty Is Key

Let's be honest; on the off chance that you need to succeed at anything, you have to have a certain level of certainty. This doesn't imply that you have to strongly and valiantly assault each part of life. There surely may be ranges where you need certainty. You have to recognize, be that as it may, the ranges of life where you should be sure about request to succeed.

The primary thing you have to do is to distinguish where you require more certainty, and where you don't. How about we say, for instance, that you fear open talking, and you have to get over that to succeed. For this situation, you have to pick up trust in talking before individuals. On the off chance that you need trust in cooking a decent supper, that surely won't make any difference to you're talking capacity. You have to recognize where you have to pick up certainty, and where absence of certainty doesn't make a difference. This doesn't imply that you can't pick up trust in different zones, however.

One of the perils of an absence of certainty is that it can fuel disappointment and make it so you can't afford a nice car with a car fm transmitter. Disappointment then prompts diminished certainty, which



Simon's Rock Study Group on Institutional Transition and Mission
LEARNING CIRCLES INITIATIVE

Call for Participation, 19 August 2015

Dear All,

This letter is intended to both introduce and invite you to Learning Circles. Learning Circles (LCs) are imagined as extended and continuing occasions for acculturation, collaboration, transformation, and shared governance that will be tied to each other as well as accountable to the wider community. Many of you might recall a proposal to institute Learning Circles presented by the Study Group's Subgroup on *Inclusion Beyond Diversity*, at the final Community Meeting of last year. That initial idea made its way into *Study Notes* (the Study Group report for Spring 2015), and then was met with approval and encouragement by various stakeholders. It also resonates with the wider community call for greater opportunities to come together, as well as the conviction that there is ultimately no such thing as non-participation in the institution and that we are therefore obliged to think through the ways in which ostensibly individual or separate lives--student, faculty, staff--coalesce into the larger scene of institutional life. This summer, we were asked to pursue this idea toward some kind of implementation, even if on a limited scale. A few meetings later, we are pleased to come to you with this invitation to participate in piloting the Learning Circles Initiative this fall. Many details are already in place, and some will be hammered out by the time we convene in September.

Learning Circle goals are as follows:

- improve campus climate and culture across various sub-communities;
- value and remember student, staff, faculty, and alumni engagement and participation, and what we contribute to institutional life and its vitality in more fundamental ways, beyond the usual metrics;
- facilitate substantive classroom-community connections and continuities in the interest of a wholesome and healthy notion of campus life (rather than student vs. academic life);
- move us in the direction of new and meaningful opportunities for shared governance and ownership of the community and its future;
- commune and communicate in ways that are inventive, productive, rewarding at personal, social, and political levels, and build a new institutional life in common with and within the institution.

Oversight:

At least in this pilot year, the Learning Circles (LCs) will be overseen by the *Inclusion Beyond Diversity* Subgroup of the Study Group with support from Academic Affairs and Student Life.

Structure:

In the pilot year, we hope for several (4-6 depending on interest) LCs of 9-12 people each. (Roughly 1 or 2 faculty, 2 staff members [1 residence life, plus 1 additional], no more than 2 students from each year, 1 alum). Each LC will also include one community council member.

Theme and Operations:

Each LC will be organized around a theme drawn from the core values of our institution. Some of the themes in play right now are Trust, Empathy, Dignity, Wellbeing, Expression, Access, Accountability—broad enough to allow each LC to find its own way through them to produce a shared understanding and an output that presents that to the community. Groups can choose to be more policy-oriented, focusing on pressing issues of institutional practices, but they can also choose to approach the overarching goal of cultural shift in other ways.

The hope is to eventually have a standardized time set aside for community meetings and LCs that does not overlap with faculty meeting times on Wednesday afternoons. Monday afternoon is a good candidate, except for students in 3 classes scheduled during that time frame this fall. For now, LCs will find a time to meet regularly through consultation, and the Study Group will help with finding an acceptable time. The Circles will meet for an hour weekly (or for two hours bi-weekly) to engage in discussions and shared projects. These projects may range from policy proposals to art installations and everything in between. LCs will report back on their work to the monthly Community Meetings, to establish a sense of interconnectedness and accountability so necessary to a positive campus culture. Every learning circle will be given a rough timeline that will encourage ample planning for projects and continued involvement with the wider community throughout the semester. Food will be provided at every meeting!

Every LC will begin with a short “syllabus” and 3-4 recommended materials to use as points of departure/catalysts for the group to come together. Regular outputs of the LCs will include:

- Maintaining a blog as archive for each learning circle, as a follow-up to every meeting. The Study Group will assist with setting up this archive.
- Developing a syllabus over the course of the year.
- Short monthly presentation at the Community Meeting
- Final project/output, or “public things,” emerging from the work of the LC, that invite and involve the community. Everything from public art installations to policy change proposals. Left open for circles to decide what feels most appropriate. One per semester.

In the pilot year, the LCs will further discuss and clarify issues of how students, faculty, and staff will be appropriately credited/compensated for their involvement in a LC in future iterations.

First semester students (either Academy or College students) will not be official members of any LC, but are invited to visit them. After their first semester, they may join any LC that can accommodate them.

If you are interested in joining a Learning Circle, please fill out this form by clicking [here](#). If you have any questions or would like further information, please submit a question or comment via the online form, but also feel free to reach out to any of the Inclusion Beyond Diversity group members, listed below. Again, the current choices of themes drawn from our College’s core values are: Trust, Empathy, Dignity, Wellbeing, Expression, Access, Accountability.

In conviviality,

The *Inclusion Beyond Diversity* Subgroup of the Simon’s Rock Study Group on Institutional Transition and Mission (in alphabetical order: Asma Abbas, Dave Collopy, Natalie Desrosiers, William Dunbar, Ciaran Finlayson, Lily Goldberg, Eden-Renee Hayes, Sara Mugridge, Daniel Neilson, Cameron Powell, Anna Poplawski, Gabe Salgado)

How could we have let this happen. The days approach and pass by ceaselessly, time piles up in a corner of a paradigm of progress. If you're invested in maintenance in terms of a historical-accurate-whatever then you're busy living someone else's (subjective) memory. Beyond actual <—> fantastic enaction, enacting, enactually enacting. Mirage as a rendering? Writing that reads both ways. I'm a young professional and time is money! We have means, and we should understand them. Where do proposals and developments go? Where can people cut loose these days? The days approach and pass by ceaselessly. Time piles up in a world predicated on something else that depends on the opportunity to lash out. They also won't say anything of value. Nondeterministic proximities of reflections (sunglitters). You can't stage life but that doesn't stop people from thinking they can maintain their dominance while they make us speak their languages and replicate their systems. I have to live in a frictionless way. The ending no longer exists. The physical impossibility of a common enemy. There is no smoking gun, just ourselves and our ability to control/enact/precieve "total social phenomena" by overestimating the accuracy of their measures, because society relies on precariously stacked narratives that require constant maintenance. A search could be a vestige. Dry intelligence, quantum intelligence, liquid, solid, dry, surface/non-surface intelligence, compositional, gaseous, newtonian/non-newtonian intelligence. Am I ever looking at you? The past which is always resettling to accommodate new developments. Everything is so normal. We have to do what you know is wrong, easy. Don't do what you feel might be wrong, hard. Discovers implicit violence of "harmlessness" as a means of demonstrating implicit violence. You're not the only you we're looking at. We're looking at you. An awfully cruel low hanging fruit. Obviously over ripe, rotten. Unmutable spaces, inserting themselves and seeming harmless even though you can "know" the future. You can't conceive of a building as a thing to be conjectural, bringing back the past. Out of an alternative. Just trying to be influenced by

things. You don't ask the insects to leave the building. Limits, possibilities, facilitates, inhibits, perceptions, no front, no back, no past, no future, no threshold. No surface. You can't know how it will agitate your present/past archiving creates more questions than answers. The language and image of subversion feel old and tired, sympathetic somehow, pitiable out of decay or disaster. Suggests there's "opportunity" or something—that is optional for them. You are all talk. A life worth living? See me now! False. Building completion. A fixated intent of content that might not have. Moving at a velocity where our minds and bodies were both optimizing on different planes of existence putting our bodies ahead of mind, maintaining a distance, conditions and dynamics, choosing to stay where we put our bodies. A door that doesn't suggest there wasn't one. The more people know the nothingness the tighter they cling to these systems. Some cold replacement for actual comfort—is that still a thing? On a pyre with no explanation, no occasion, no mission. A school can be improved on. All institutions rot time/space/proximity. Informal, infamous, prefamous, preface, prehumorously. Outward/inward/actual/desired representation. Unthinkable thought, unspoken word, wordless thoughts, restless mind. We both think you are all talk. A life worth living? Couldn't care less and never actually did anything but could have at any point. We are redistributing/revisiting old proposals. 9"x12" soft cover magazine format. Dangerous and in danger. Historical narratives are arbitrary regardless of duration. Where do I start to put all of these differences? The undoing of differences doesn't mean they didn't exist or that their existence wasn't impactful. Now I know all of the universe. Life's so easy now. Aspirational, avatared, idealized, abstract, rose colored, cinematic, animated walk. Small photos on a page, catalog format (artistically and with "experimental forms"). The future becomes us and accumulates in a corner. That seems pretty easy. It's worse because I don't know why it feels worse. I'm all business! "We" will be completely legible, watered down, obscured reflections:

