

THE COOPER UNION
MEETING OF THE FACULTY-STUDENT SENATE

MINUTES

Monday, April 1, 2013
6:00-8:00pm
Room 506 – 41 Cooper Square

Present:

Faculty and Library Representatives: Atina Grossmann (Vice Chair), Daniel Lepek, Thomas Micchelli, Stan Mintchev (Secretary), Sohnya Sayres, and Sean Sculley.

Student Representatives: Oliver Antoniu, Asher Mones, Michael Pimpinella, Phong (Kiwi) Nguyen, and Jon Cuba.

Ex-Officio Members: President Jamshed Bharucha, Dean William Germano, Acting Library Director Carol Salomon, and Vice-President T.C. Westcott.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04pm.

MINUTES

Minutes from the meeting held on February 26, 2013 were presented for reading and discussion.

Revisions were solicited. Corrections were proposed.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of February 26, 2013 as corrected.

Motion passed. (10 in favor, 0 opposed)

PROGRESS REPORT: STANDING COMMITTEES

SCHEDULING COMMITTEE:

Senate members were informed of the goals of the committee, which are aimed at improving quality and transparency of the scheduling process at the institution. The committee plans to meet with those members of the four constituencies who are currently involved with scheduling. The committee is also planning to poll the community at large for input. It was stressed that any survey prepared by the committee should follow the procedure for IRB approval prior to implementation.

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY STUDIES:

The Committee had not met during the period following the last Senate meeting on February 26, 2013. It was noted that at its last meeting, the committee had discussed the development of a cross-disciplinary course that may be taught by faculty from each of the various schools. The membership was reminded that such a course had been in place in the past.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

The committee is carefully considering the differences between the concepts of *honor code* and *academic integrity*; committee members are engaged in studying the applicability of each of these concepts to The Cooper Union community. The committee is working off of a several page document prepared over the last few years, and has started to discuss the development of a protocol for enforcing a policy as well as providing an appeals process. It was noted that the existing document is still too long and in need of a unifying vision.

MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WITH MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Members were reminded of the Executive Committee's meeting scheduled for April 8, 2013; input was solicited regarding questions that the membership would like to address to the Board regarding the latter's deliberations and plans for the institution.

UPDATE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

President Bharucha informed the membership that the trustees continue their deliberations after having received the reports from the various schools. He asked members to keep this in mind as they formulate questions for the Board.

REPRESENTATION FOR THE MEETING:

It was noted that only three of the four members of the Executive Committee would be able to attend the meeting. The membership entered a discussion regarding the widening the representation. It was noted that this would require a change in the Bylaws.

Student members expressed concern regarding the lack of student representation at this meeting. A motion was made to amend Article IV. 5. of the Bylaws titled "Liaison to the Board of Trustees" so as to include the text:

"In the event that a student is not serving as officer of the Faculty-Student Senate, a student representative shall be elected from among the sitting student senators in order to participate in the meetings of the Executive Committee with Board members."

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, this motion was tabled and will be reintroduced at the subsequent meeting.

DISCUSSION OF ISSUES/QUESTIONS:

The membership expressed an interest in hearing about the options that are currently being considered for the institution. President Bharucha gave an overview and remarked that Board members would most-likely go over these as well. The President explained that there are three possible directions: (1) new programs to generate revenue that would support the current full-tuition fellowship for undergraduates, (2) some form of undergraduate tuition, and (3) downsizing of some sort. Regarding Option (3), it was noted that fixed costs prevent an across-the-board downsizing; for this reason, the option is tantamount to closure of one or more of the academic divisions in order to secure the viability of the ones that remain open. It was emphasized that no final decisions have been made.

The membership expressed concern regarding the current distribution of resources between academic support and administration. It was noted that Cooper Union currently dedicates about 65% of its budget to academic support, in comparison to a national average of about 50% from among comparable institutions.

The membership requested that the Executive Committee address the question of changing institutional philosophy as related to fundraising, specifically, the concern that contributions were made to the former Capital Campaign under the assumption that the institution is committed to providing a full-tuition fellowship: How would a change in the full-tuition fellowship policy affect confidence in the school's overall philosophy, and consequently, how would this affect future fundraising?

Members expressed concern regarding the status of the Tax equivalency arrangement with the State in case of changes to the full-tuition fellowship policy. President Bharucha noted that the arrangement is philosophically tied to the original Deed of Trust of Peter Cooper, which does not explicitly mention the full-tuition fellowship.

Members asked that the Executive committee request an update regarding the pending ratification of the new governance for the School of Engineering.

SCHEDULING THE NEXT MEETINGS

Several members expressed interest in holding a final meeting for the academic year, to be scheduled for some time after April 8, 2013 so as to provide the Executive committee an opportunity to report on its meeting with members of the Board of Trustees.

It was decided that the Senate leadership should work with the Office of the President in order to set a meeting schedule for Fall 2013.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm