

FRIENDS OF COOPER BREAKOUT SESSION 3

CHRISTOPHER HONG (EE '13)

On Thursday, January 26, 2012, alumni, faculty, staff, and students gathered for the third Friends of Cooper Breakout session from 6PM to 10PM in room 106 of the New Academic Building. This event was organized by the organizers of “Free Cooper Union! A Community Summit”. Karina Tipton (CE '99) and Sean Cusack (BSE '98) were the main moderators of the event. The goal of this get-together was to create a visioning document of Cooper Union's future to be shared with the Cooper community in hopes of improving Cooper Union's financial situation.

This session started with a brief introduction of every attendee and was followed by the breakout session in which everyone was divided into groups to discuss one of five categories: education/mission statement, financials, communication, what did we miss..., and consolidation of previous ideas. I was at the communication group along with Nadia Pervez (EE '99). We discussed how the whole tuition issue started from a rumor rather than from a campus notice from the administration. We also discussed how the administration has become more quiet these past few months. In addition to these topics, we did talk about Cooper life and classes that we had in Cooper. Not much has changed in the past decade or so.

In the end, we came up with five questions that we would ask the administration if they were to suddenly call and said they would answer any questions. The questions are:

1. Is tuition still on the table? (The answer is most likely yes, but if it was suddenly “no”, many people will breathe a sigh of relief.)
2. What have the task forces (i.e. Revenue Task Force, savings task force) created to save Cooper Union done so far?
3. How much money is expected to be raised from the new hires?
4. How willing is the administration to take salary cuts? Why or why not?



Alumni, faculty, staff, and students brainstorming ideas for Cooper's future in the third Friends with Cooper Breakout Session.

5. How much of the revenue from donations is “sustainable”, meaning these donations are continuously incoming monthly or yearly? (i.e. \$100 a month)

I asked Nadia Pervez how effective these breakout sessions are since she has been to every session so far. She stated, “I think we're making progress in identifying themes and problems. It would be great if we had more student participation. Students would understand the impact of changes the most and it would be helpful to hear their voices. We've heard a lot of opinions and thoughts in these sessions. We have to take the most promising ideas and put it in action. We also have to improve the school's relationship with the student and alumni whether or not it would help donation rates. It's difficult to sort these ideas though – some ideas relate to the school's mission vs. the numbers necessary to keep the school alive. At the end of the day, we need concrete ideas for economic benefit.”

At the end of the session, we all had a large discussion to re-cap all of the ideas that were brought up in the small groups. In the education/mission statement group, it was concluded that it was difficult to defend the mission of Cooper Union and a lot of alumni, students, staff, faculty, and administration are not given the full picture of Cooper's condition.

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HIRING UN-FREEZE UPDATE

SOPHIE RAND (BSE '12)

Earlier this year, President Barucha put a hiring freeze into place due to the current financial deficit. While it's true that there is a hiring freeze, two new staff members have been hired in the Development department. When asked why these staff members were hired, director of development Derek Wittner replied that the positions already existed, and that those who held it previously left in July and had not since been replaced. The two positions that were recently filled are the director of alumni relations and director of annual fund. He added that there are still two existing positions which are yet to be filled. The newest hires will be involved in Alumni relations and giving, which are vital to managing the deficit. Rumors have been circulating that the two new hires are being paid very high salaries, and while Wittner would not comment on this, he did say that they are being paid at the low end of the market. He said that he is working tirelessly to be as efficient as possible while working toward rebuilding the schools financial circumstance.

Wittner said that the Development department is trying to not only fill the current deficit, but to create a long lasting sustainable financial model. Wittner pointed out that in order to do this efficiently and effectively, qualified workers are essential, who come at a price. He commented that “if you pay less, you'll get a mediocre staff”, and that he is working tirelessly to be as efficient as possible with Cooper's resources. Wittner commented that he is aiming to raise the standard of the development department so that financial crises such as the current one can be avoided in the future. When asked about the sentiments of anger in the Cooper community, he said that “there is no one here under nefarious circumstances” and that the new hires are “not just sitting at their computers”. Wittner said that the development department has “seen good results from alumni” in the past few months, presumably due to the extensive outreach efforts his department has made.

100% DONATION CAMPAIGN

JULIA ASTRUCKAS (EE '13)

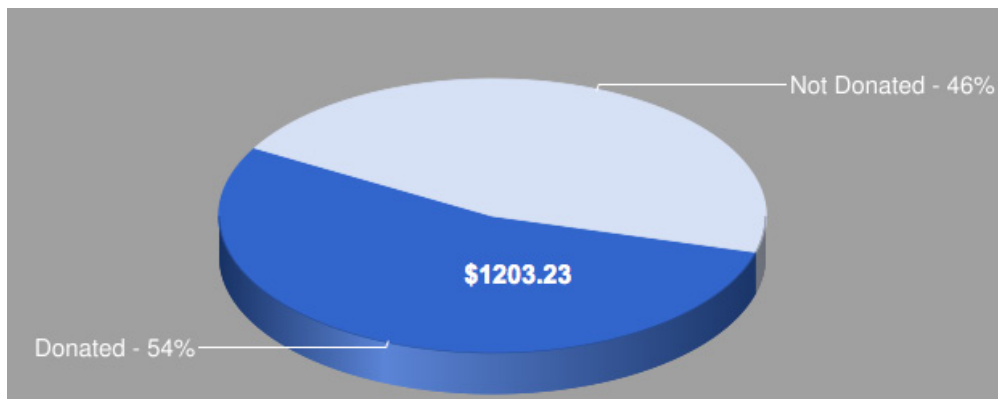
“DONATE!” Ratan Sur can be heard calling from the lobby of 41 Cooper. Following the lead of the Art and Architecture Student Councils, Engineering Student Council began a campaign last week to collect nominal donations from 100% of the engineering student body. Starting last Wednesday and continuing until Tuesday, January 31, ESC has been collecting donations of any amount and keeping track of both the donation totals and the percentage of participation. Ratan and other ESC

members have been volunteering hours of their time to collect donations and encourage their peers to participate. To promote awareness of the 100% donation campaign, ESC representatives are handing out “I support The Cooper Union” stickers to anyone who makes a donation. These stickers are a custom design created by Student Services in 30 Cooper specifically for the cause.

By Friday afternoon, 54% of the engineering school student body made donations ranging from as little as a penny to as much as \$100, for a total of over \$1200. Of course, ESC continues to stress that the purpose of this

effort is not to raise a substantial amount of money, but to show both the administration and the outside world that its students support The Cooper Union in the midst of this financial crisis.

Although more than half of the engineering school has already donated, some students continue to doubt that anywhere near 100% participation can be reached, and that the message sent by this effort will be useful. ESC will continue to collect donations today and tomorrow in the lobby, and urges anyone who has not yet participated to donate. “No amount is too little,” Kristof Toff reiterates. Students can go to esc.cooper.edu to see the current status of the campaign.



(left) Pie chart of the status of the 100% Donation Campaign from ESC's website: esc.cooper.edu.

(right) The “I Support the Cooper Union” sticker awarded to each donor.



BREAKOUT SESSION 3

(continued from front)

The financial group brought up several good points. Professor Richard Stock brought up the idea of changing the coffee store and the art galleries in 41 Cooper Square to a pub where the chemical engineers can create and sell a new type of brewed beer.

Professor Toby Cumberbatch proposed eliminating the deans (this would save more than \$750,000 a year) and have rotating faculty to lead the departments. He also suggested eliminating 30 Cooper Square, claiming that there are a lot of people who just sit at their desks making more than \$100,000 , which is more than most faculty members. This is not a typo, most full-time faculty members and professors make less than six figures.

Professor Stock also brought up the fact that 30 Cooper Square costs \$2 million a year just to rent the space. Professor Sohnya Sayres suggested approaching big philanthropists (like Bloomberg) and articulating properly why we need money. Another topic that was brought up was the renegotiation of the METLife loan. Cooper may be able to raise a lot of money to show METLife that it is possible to renegotiate the loan terms. Also, it was mentioned that we could give METLife naming rights to the NAB.

In the what did you miss... group, ideas of reaching out to the alumni were brainstormed. It was also mentioned that one reason why the donation rates may not be so high is due to the lack of positive emotional attachment to Cooper. Cooper Union is more like an extension of high school to many students. One reason why this may be the case is due to the fact that Cooper is somewhat of a commuter school. Another idea is to reach out to other



An alumnus taking notes on ideas being discussed.



A tense discussion on the financials table.

companies for donations rather than just the alumni base. Also, more events and activities should be held to keep alumni involved with Cooper.

The consolidation of idea group listed ideas that were brought up from previous sessions.

There was a student, Ben Schenker, who attended the session and is in the process of starting a tutoring club. This club would go around and tutor low-income families and receive donations from philanthropists. All of these donations will go to Cooper. He has already recruited students who are interested. This idea shows great leadership on his part and we will see how things turn out.

In the end, I have mixed feelings about these breakout sessions. They're nice in gathering alumni, faculty, staff, and students together and networking. In addition, there are some great ideas that came out of it as well. However, there were times when the session became a free for all discussion where there were a few people who jumped in whenever they wanted to and interrupted speakers. The event started out very organized with groups and such, but towards the end, people were shuffling in and out and discussions became a bit disorganized. This is probably due to the long time commitment of the session (four hours). There needs to be a clear leader or moderator in these sessions to move things along and keep things on track. Will these sessions lead to the survival of Cooper Union? We will have to wait and see.

As an aside, there will be future breakout sessions and the organizers will try to incorporate more students by providing FREE food and advertising the events more effectively in the Cooper community. Keep an eye out for posters.

Photos by Jenna Lee (ME '15)

KENKEN

MARCUS MICHELEN
(CE '14)

KenKen is a Japanese paper puzzle by Tetsuya Miyamoto much like Sudoku, only it involves both math and logic. It roughly translates to “cleverness-cleverness.”

Instructions: Like Sudoku, each row and column must contain the numbers from 1 to 7. The number in the upper-left corner of the bolded shape made up of squares is the number you need to get by using the operation next to the number. For example, the rectangle in the bottom-

middle with a “13+” in the upper right corner can be filled in with a 7,6 or a 6,7. The single-box shape in the upper right-corner has no operation and will be filled with a 5.

Bonus: What is special about this KenKen?

The solution to this puzzle will be released next week.

2880×			2÷		17+	5
	70×			24×		
						4-
2-		13+	2		9+	
1-	28×			3360×		
			13+			
1	1-					

4	2	3	5 or 1	1 or 5
2	3	4	1 or 5	5 or 1
1	4	5	3	2
3	5	1	2	4
5	1	2	4	3

Mini-Issue #5
KenKen Solution
(to the right)

REVENUE TASK FORCE UPDATE

MARTIN LAWLESS (ME '13)

Last semester, President Bharucha promised the Cooper Union a Revenue Task Force in many addresses that he had made to both the community and the public. The Task Force has since been created; the list of members can be found at <http://taskforce.cooper.edu>, a webpage dedicated solely to the committee. Unfortunately, this list occupies the entire website. No trace of what the Revenue Task Force has done or will do appears on the site. I sincerely hope that the reason that no updates have been released is not because no progress has been made, especially since the President had previously announced a very ambitious goal of having a “sustainable” economic plan by the Spring of 2012. While the Spring semester started last week, the Task Force still has a little over a month to produce this financial model. Optimistically, at least some work has been done towards this goal.

Pioneer writer Saimon Sharif will continue to contact Sharang Phadke, ESC member and student-body representative for the task force, for more information on the matter.

JAMES IS STAYING!

MARCUS MICHELEN (CE '14)

James A. Roulston, one of Cooper’s security guards, will be staying at Cooper. Last month, The Cooper Pioneer interviewed James and he told us about the series of events that brought him to Cooper. Near the end of the interview, he mentioned that he planned on leaving Cooper in the near future due to low wages and lack of raises. The security guards, James included, were making only \$8 an hour. Computer Center operators start at \$9.50 an hour and minimum wage in New York is \$7.50 an hour. After our article and some discussion around the Cooper community, Jody Grapes, Cooper’s Director of Facilities Management, contacted FJC Security. In turn, FJC penned a new contract that gave all security guards a raise along with periodic raises. Naturally, this has been a much-discussed issue for some time but no action had been made until recently.

“I want to thank The Pioneer and all of my supporters who supported me all this time.”

- JAMES A. ROUSTON

When asked about the subject, James stated, “I want to thank The Pioneer and all of my supporters who supported me all this time,” James said. “I also want to thank FJC and Cooper for working with FJC. All guards got raises and the future is looking very bright for us now.”

WE WANT TO
SHOWCASE STUDENT
WORK

The Pioneer needs more art and architecture work from Cooper students!

Get some recognition for your work by publishing them in our paper. E-mail them to cooperpioneer@gmail.com.

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Shortlink: goo.gl/YkmW1



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