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# The Pioneer

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## DEAN DAHLBERG PRESENTATION AND Q&A SESSION

ALLISON TAU (ChE '15)

Last Monday, October 14th, Dean Dahlberg was invited by the Engineering Student Council to give a presentation to the students about her vision for the School of Engineering followed by a Q&A session. She had given the same presentation to the faculty a week prior.

Her plan includes eight key initiatives—some to be added or removed—but at least a set of initiatives revolving around the ideas of 21st century engineering in a global context, leadership, and adaptability in the field. Overall, she plans to work toward increasing the rankings of the engineering school, from #7 to #1, while maintaining a rigorous curriculum, promoting leadership, and improving interdisciplinary work between art, architecture, engineering, and the humanities. Dean Dahlberg’s overarching goal for the School of Engineering is to “preserve and enhance academic excellence while moving towards financial stability”.

The first point of her vision is academic excellence, which refers to advertising that this school about being more than just free. Particularly, she talked about how Cooper Union students have a tendency to overload on courses and do graduate-level work as undergraduates. She also hopes to move toward a focus on more faculty research, including a greater number of opportunities for undergraduate involvement in research with professors. The second point refers to the implementation and expansion of fee-based graduate programs, of which there would be two tracks: a theses track focused on re-

search and a non-thesis track focused on students with plans to go into industry, that she claims would hopefully attract fee-paying students to the Cooper Union. In addition to a fee-based masters programs, the third point of Dean’s Dahlberg’s key initiatives for the engineering school is the introduction a fee-based pre-college program in engineering to attract gifted college students. While fee-based, the program would provide grants for “underserved” students. The program is what Dean Dahlberg refers to as the “STEM pipeline”, an initiative to increase the number of K12 students going into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics-based fields.

The final five points Dean Dahlberg only briefly touched upon before ending her presentation, but they are: improve student recruitment and retention, improve communications and ranking, build community, reinvent the C.V. Starr Research Foundation, and implement professional development across all faculty, staff, and administration.

Following the presentation of Dean Dahlberg’s eight key initiatives for the School of Engineering, the floor was opened to the students for a question and answer session. Questions from the students were mostly concerned with her ideas about undergraduate research, graduate programs, and certificates/minors. However, Dean Dahlberg decided to end the session early once the students began asking about her stance on undergraduate tuition, since she stated that she had not been invited to speak about that particular issue. ♦

## ART AT COOPER

MATT LEDWIDGE (ART '16)

*Art is a Bucket*  
Or so proclaimed the Swiss born writer-philosopher Alain De Botton on the eighteenth of October in a lecture and book signing entitled “Art as Therapy” in the Great Hall. By this De Botton was expressing his belief that art

is a container for the most important parts of human experience and that art is more important and relevant today than ever before. De Botton proceeded to explain the “things that art is about” because, as he says, nobody likes very much to talk about

(continued on back)

## LETTER REGARDING ART PORTFOLIO REVIEWS

RYAN GARRETT (ART '06)

Dear Friends,

I was in Ohio [on October 5th] reviewing portfolios in Cincinnati and Cleveland for Cooper and I have to say it seemed to be a pretty dismal sign of what Cooper may face as we switch to a tuition based model. I’ve attended Portfolio Reviews for the last three years and despite our total lack of advertising or signage we always have had very long lines and excited prospective applicants. Typically, if there were a student that firstly knew about the Cooper Union and secondly had any prospect of getting in, they would be excited to say that Cooper was their first choice of school and that they would be willing to commit if offered an Early Decision application. In both cities this weekend this was not at all the case.

There were no lines at all, only a slow trickle of students. Schools nearby had long lines. At first I attributed this to possible regional discrepancies, or it being the first Portfolio day of the year, but it became very clear that these factors alone could not account for this dramatic reversal of interest in the school. Of the students to whom I spoke with who were talented, motivated, had invested research into potential art schools and whom I felt were worthy of a referral for Early Decision, each said they would not be willing to commit to a binding decision based on Cooper’s decision to start charging tuition in 2014. This hesitance, of course, may have also been caused by the administration’s decision to delay [early decision applicants] last year.

Oftentimes prospective students knew a lot about Cooper and said that it would have been their top choice, but on account of tuition, they felt more attracted to their other top choices (RISD, SAIC, Pratt, etc) because of the facilities, range of specialized programs, and other nonessentials available at those universities. I made sure to guarantee them that it was only half tuition, and that there were a number of potential merit and need-based scholarships that would be available, and that the application process would remain need-blind, but it was clear that at the prospect of being charged tuition, to these students Cooper was just another art school out of many, and one that did not compete in regards to its superficial offerings.

No matter how many tentative caveats are attached (possible extra scholarships, need-blind admissions, etc), the introduction of tuition completely undoes Cooper’s exceptional reputation by placing it in direct competition on the open marketplace. All of this was confirmed by the reviewers who [went to] Texas. The fears and concerns that the Cooper Community had over the impact of switching to tuition are no longer speculative.

I have to say it was all very depressing, and I do not mean to sound alarmist, but it was strikingly clear, though I’m sure of no surprise, what this economic model is going to mean for the future of Cooper. Cooper will be unable to continue relying on attraction and will have to turn to promotion. The school will have to invest huge amounts in advertising to attract top caliber students. This, of course, will mean that the school will need to continually expand (its facilities, its degree programs, departments) in order to compete where it did not need to compete before.

When the board members shrugged off these concerns in the lead up to their final decision to charge tuition by saying things like “Cooper is not only about being tuition free” or “I would send my kid to Cooper even without a pool, or state of the art facilities” they were clearly being disingenuous... or mournfully ignorant.

Regardless, it seems necessary to confront them with reality in order to counter such wishful thinking. One parent whose mother had graduated from Cooper and had really wanted her daughter to attend asked “Whats the difference between Cooper

and any of the other big art schools now?” I tried to explain Cooper’s ethic toward education, how it attracted the most talented faculty and students, how the creativity of the students was less impinged by commercial interests or economic pressure, but I realized that all of these qualities were inextricably tied to the economic freedom that it had been guaranteed throughout its history. She simply responded, “But how long can they sustain that?” I had no answer and I’m wondering if anyone does.

For my part I would be happy to help write recruitment reports, along with the other reviewers/recruiters, to give the Board, the President, and the rest of the Cooper Community a concrete assessment of the impact that charging tuition will have on the School of Art’s future.

Sincerely,  
Ryan Garrett

## CONCRETE CONFESSIONAL

MATTHEW LEE (ME '15)

On October 12th, Cooper Union was paid a visit by the world famous graffiti artist Banksy. As part of his one month show around New York City called “Better Out Than In”, Banksy’s piece was set up inside one of the large concrete blocks right between 41 Cooper Square and the First Ukrainian Assembly of God Church . This “Concrete Confessional” depicts a priest inside the concrete block, and appears to be based off of a 1950’s photograph by Berni Schoenfield. However, within a day the piece was altered with a white beard and medallion, making the priest resemble Peter Cooper. Inside another concrete block, located directly next to the Banksy piece, is a depiction of Jamshed Barucha, Cooper Union’s President. Free Cooper Union claimed the credit for this work, called “Cooper Confessional”, criticizing President Barucha for deviating from the mission statement of the school providing full-tuition merit scholarships to all of its students. The concrete blocks have since been moved around, leaving the portrait of the president exposed to the sidewalk. Banksy’s original work is nowhere to be found. ♦



Photo Credit: Free Cooper Union





FACES OF COOPER:

ANDREA NEWMARK

CHAE,JEONG (ChE ‘16)

The Cooper Pioneer sat down with Andrea Newmark, chair of the Chemistry department, to discuss her education, seeing her former students grow up, and the importance of communicating

**The Cooper Pioneer:** Where are you from?  
**Andrea Newmark:** I grew up in Brooklyn. I went to Boston for school for two years and then ended up back in Queens. Now I’m on Long Island. So, I’m mostly a city person.

**TCP:** Can you tell me about your educational and professional background?  
**AN:** I graduated Queens College with a Bachelor’s in chemistry. Then I applied to Columbia to what they called the 4-2 program, where if you had a bachelor’s in science you could get an engineering degree. So, I ended up going to Columbia for a master’s in chemical engineering and stayed on for my Ph.D. The department at that time was chemical engineering and applied chemistry. My research ended up being more towards the applied chemistry so that’s how I ended up here. I graduated Columbia in 87 and came straight to Cooper.

I went right from grad school to teaching.

**TCP:** How did you first find out about the Cooper Union?  
**AN:** Actually, when I first saw the ad for a chemistry professor, I thought that it fit me perfectly, and even though I grew up in the city and went to school here, I hadn’t heard about Cooper until I saw that ad. Although, once I mentioned it to my mom (she grew up on the Lower East Side) she told me that she had heard of Cooper Union, but I never did.

**TCP:** What brought you to the Cooper Union?  
**AN:** When I first saw the ad, I knew it was right up my alley. I had the mixed background of chemistry and chemical engineering... they were looking for a chemistry professor, but it was an engineering school so it was a great fit. That’s really one of the reasons why I came. I also loved the location, the whole history, but it was also a great fit.

**TCP:** What is your role in Cooper?  
**AN:** I’ve been the chair of the chemistry department for the past... I guess this is my

fourth year. I’ve been a chemistry professor to the freshmen and juniors, mostly. In years past, I was a freshmen advisor, but I haven’t done that in a while. I feel that apart from teaching the chemistry classes, I like to teach students about life, about what they’re going to see when they go out into the “real” world and about how to be good people. I feel like that’s my role.

**TCP:** How do you like your job at Cooper?  
**AN:** I love my job. I love the students. I’ve been here 26 years. I love interacting with the students. They’re the best part of Cooper. I’m sure most people say that.

I’ve kept in touch with a lot of students. I love seeing what they do. We just had one of our alums give a talk and it was great to see her. I love seeing what they have accomplished, both professionally and personally, like having kids of their own.

They’re getting closer to my age! When I first started, I was not much older than they were. But somehow, it seems that my past students are getting closer and closer to my age! They have kids now. Actually, I had one student and I was told he has a kid older than my kids. I don’t know how that happened.

**TCP:** What advice would you give to Cooper students?  
**AN:** My advice would be to stop taking so many extra credits and start experiencing life a little bit: get involved in extracurricular activities, professional societies, theater groups, religious groups –whatever you want to be involved in. Put some extra time into that and take leadership roles, do community service. Taking a ton of extra courses is not necessarily what is best for your career and for you personally. It isn’t going to necessarily make you a better person. I think you really need

to develop your communication skills and find what you are passionate about. I think by doing extracurricular activities and experiencing all that the city has to offer, you’re better positioning yourself.

**TCP:** Who is your favorite professor at Cooper? Why?  
**AN:** I can’t answer that. I think the professors are all really good people and they care about their students. It’s a loaded question obviously because I can’t say one person over another and, plus I haven’t taken any of their classes, so how would I know?

**TCP:** What are some of your hobbies?  
**AN:** I like tennis, snowboarding –I love going on Dean Baker’s ski trips. I like reading, keeping up with current events, hanging out with my family; that is the best.

**TCP:** Do you have any closing remarks?  
**AN:** As I said, I think Cooper is a wonderful place. It’s in a great location, one of the greatest cities in the world. I think students should take advantage of all of the things it has to offer. I mean, they’re going to take their core courses and graduate. They should work and study hard but I feel that they really need to experience life. Part of going to college is learning to be a good person and maturing into a responsible adult. I think that people should be doing that a little more than they are. And I can’t stress enough the importance of communication skills because when our students go out into the working world or grad school, wherever they’re going to be they will need to be able to communicate. I think the one thing Cooper is lacking in is stressing how important it is for our students to be able to articulate their thoughts, whether in their professional or personal lives. I think they should take advantage of that when they’re in school.

And try to have fun! It’s supposed to be four years of... somewhat of a good time. Of course they’re always learning, but it doesn’t hurt to have some fun along the way too.

(continued from front)  
it in concrete terms for risk of ruining the ambiguity inherent to all art or becoming overly controlling. This, alongside the institutional framing of the work, hinders the ability of art to bring meaning into the lives of everyone as he believes it can.

De Botton aims to face this problem by repositioning the cultural framing around art in the public in order to make the public a more suitable place to explore anxiety, love, sadness and politics with dignity and seriousness. With wit and erudition he suggested the following to the audience: reorganizing the world’s museums by theme; looking as closely at ones partner as Manet looked at asparagus; reconsidering the things we value at different times; remaining curious; continuing to have sex; and using art as an enriching perspective-giving bucket of every aspect of our experiences. ♦

**Image of the Studio**  
How does living and working in New York shape contemporary studio practice on the level of scale, geography, and day-to-day organization? What does graphic design in New York look like?

These were the questions that ‘Image of the Studio – A Portrait of New York City

Graphic Design’ in the 41 Cooper Gallery curated by the Herb Lubalin Centre and the Athletics design studio sought to explore. The exhibition featured works of over 75 current graphic design firms in New York ranging from one-person studios to large firms, from those founded in the 1950’s to last year. Each studio was invited to submit original work and creative portraits of the designers as well as a range of data documenting the structure, history and culture of the various studios. The data was then organized into visualizations and information graphics documenting the various relationships between the studios and their New York location.

The exhibition filled the walls of the space with large panels of creative design solutions, inside jokes, interesting quotes, and information of how the studios view themselves. The information graphics are divided in such categories as “Passion & Mantras”, “Influences”, “Studio Culture”, and “Do’s and Don’ts,” with the diverse panels telling different elements of the larger story of what might be happening in graphic design in New York City today.

For more information you can visit the accompanying website at <http://imageofthestudio.com>. The exhibition closed Saturday, October 26th and a panel discussion in the Rose Auditorium Monday October 28th, 6:30-8:30pm concluded the exhibit. ♦

SPORTS UPDATE

YARA ELBOROLOS (CE ‘14)

The soccer team left on Friday to head out to Cape Cod for training for the season. The men’s basketball team just had its first official game with the New School. They also recently had their Alumni game, where graduates who were on the basketball team come back and play against the current team. The scores are listed below. ♦

Men’s Basketball Team	
Cooper Union	Alumni
75	70
Cooper Union	The New School
74	69

CRYPTOQUOTE

MARCUS MICHELEN (BSE ‘14)

A Cryptoquote is an encoded quote. It is encoded such that each and every occurrence of a letter is substituted with a different letter of the alphabet. Using clues such as frequency of occurrence and placement, the original quote can be found.

For instance, the word xbdikcxbz could be deciphered to reveal the word LONGFELLOW.

“DIDJWTVPN HXIJWQ MZ EI HBTWZ UIY PXZ  
ZWZBPVIE IU DIWVPVBVTEH. VU VP CIJWQ QZ-  
DZEQ IE DJDJWTVYPN, QIETWQ QJBF TEQ PXZ  
LJDDZPH CIJWQ PTFZ HZTPH VE HZETPZ.”  
- IYHIE CZWWZH

Last issue’s solution:  
“Nobody in America in the modern generation has read their mythology or legends.”  
- Kenneth Anger

KENKEN

MARCUS MICHELEN (BSE ‘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 5. 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 “20x” rectangle in the bottom left corner can be filled in with a 5,4 or a 4,5.

The unique solution to the last issue’s puzzle is reproduced below. This puzzle contains only one solution, which will be released in the next issue.

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

36×	120×	24×			900×
			14+		
	2				
		1-		5+	6
1-	720×				
					1