

HSS DEPT. TO HIRE FULL-TIME FACULTY, STUDENTS PETITION FOR DIVERSITY

MONICA CHEN (ME '18) | MATTHEW GRATTAN (ChE '19)

The Department of Humanities and Social Sciences is currently in the process of hiring three new full-time faculty members as well as two post-doctorate faculty members. The prospect of new faculty is an “exciting moment,” according to the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, William Germano, as it is the first hire in at least 10 years.

The three new full-time faculty members will each have a unique area of focus. One will specialize in economics or another quantitative social science, another will specialize in philosophy, and the third will specialize in art history from the 20th century to the present. The economics and philosophy positions will be on a tenure-track, meaning that the new hires will begin as assistant professors with the prospect of tenure. The art history position will be of open rank.

The two post-doctorate faculty members will be hired on a two-year appointment. One will likely focus in comparative literature and the other in history. A post-doctorate position is a “springboard” to a full-time career in humanities and social sciences, according to Dean Germano.

Currently, the HSS Department is in the process of interviewing candidates. The hiring committee for each position is chaired by a current full-time faculty member. Professor Buckley, Professor Sayres, and Professor Stieber, chair the committees for the economics, philosophy, and art history positions respectively. Professor Swann and Professor Grossmann will chair the searches for the comparative literature and history post-doc positions. As the hiring process advances, finalist candidates for the new full-time positions would visit the Cooper Union and meet with students and faculty members.

The hiring of five new positions is no small issue and could have a tremendous impact on the HSS curriculum. New professors could bring new ideas, experiences, and teaching techniques to the classroom and help “shape the forward culture of Cooper,” according to Dean Germano.

Given that the current HSS curriculum has been structured by the same six current full-time faculty professors for over a decade, introducing three new full-time faculty members will completely alter the arrangement of the curriculum. Seeing this as an opportunity to transform the “oppressive Euro-centric” focus of the curriculums to include more diverse perspectives ranging from race to gender, a group of students have recently drafted the following petition:

- 1. The humanities full-time faculty publically recognize and commit to dismantle the racial cissexist biases that are motivating the humanities department.*
- 2. The full-time faculty release student enrollment data from the past 10 years, so that the community may discern whether these reductive curriculums have an effect on student participation and interest in HSS courses.*
- 3. The full-time faculty institute the ideals of affirmative actions in the hiring process of current and future faculty appointments, ultimately leading to the hiring of educators that do not represent the racist precedent in the humanities department.*
- 4. The full-time faculty participate in a campus wide community discussion where both students and faculty can open new dialogue regarding concerns over the humanities curriculum.*

The petition currently has over 300 signatures urging the HSS full-time faculty-hiring committee to acknowledge and resolve the perceived tradition of systemic racism that runs within the department. Currently, students are advocating for the HSS curriculum to place a greater emphasis on teaching history and literature through the perspective of minority groups. The petition argues that Humanities courses should be representative of the entire Cooper Union student body rather than limiting our understanding of history through a Western-European viewpoint. Waseem Nafisi (Art '18), a supporter of the petition, states, “If you take a look at HSS 3, we dedicate an entire

semester to European history but the rest of the world was not included in the course.”

Waseem recounted, “This will allow students of color as well as transgender and queer students to feel included and acknowledged not just within the HSS department, but in our institution as well. I was talking to a black student who came from a school that was predominantly African American. She felt comfortable to be able to speak out in class and raise her hand and participate in class discussions...She could see herself in the professors and felt that she had a place in the community. Coming to Cooper, she states that there are almost no administrators or professors of color within the art school. She doesn’t have a place in the classroom because she’s reading texts by primarily white authors through a European gaze—her history and therefore, herself, are not visible in the curriculum... For us to learn about our world through a gaze that does not represent these minority voices is really detrimental; we really narrow the perspective through which we see the world and we reproduce these racist and ignorant stigmas through this curriculum.”

Diverse perspectives in history and literature could potentially provide a narrative that is reflective of the various ethnicities, sexual orientations, and other cultural differences observed amongst the entire student body, not just the views of the current full-time faculty professors. The petition asserts that the intention of a humanities course should broaden students’ understanding of various cultures and prominent historical events, specifically through the standpoint of different cultural groups involved. The petition does not call to completely eliminate the influence of Western culture from the courses, but rather to include additional cultural perspectives to the teachings of the curriculum. By hiring a more diverse and qualified selection of full-time HSS professors, students hope the rigid structure of the curriculum will transform to include more viewpoints from a wider range of minority groups that can identify with a greater array of students. ♦

SPRING CALCULUS MIGRATION

DANIEL GALPERIN (ChE '18)

In the evening of February 8 and 9, several first-year students received e-mails from David Chenkin, the Associate Registrar, informing them that they were transferred from their section of Calculus II into a different section. Students that were directly affected by the change as well as those not directly affected reacted quite abrasively to this change. The consensus among freshman students is that this incident is the latest in a series of confusing and seemingly unfair registration-related events.

The general trend was that students were being moved from Professor Vulakh’s section of Calculus II into Professor Mintchev’s section. Both professors planned to give an exam on February 10, which posed a big issue for some students who were preparing for an exam of a certain style, and were being made to take a different style exam with one or two days notice. Some students were also moved around from Professor Bailyn’s and



Ad. Chair Nick Breaser amidst freshmen. Photo by Wentao Zhang (ChE '19).

Professor Smyth’s sections, which creates the possibility of a student not having an exam, being moved, and being forced to take an exam with just one or two days notice.

Professor Vulakh’s section had 39 students attending class, which technically violates Cooper Union Federation of College Teachers (CUFCT) legal limits on class size. The maximum allowable class size is 35 students, with the caveat that

a class size can be expanded with approval from the professor teaching the class, the head of department and the Dean of the school. Many of the students attending Professor Vulakh’s class were on the waitlist for his section and were not registered for any section of Calculus II, in hopes of miraculously getting into the class in the case that registered students left the section. It would seem their dreams came true as many students that were regis-

tered for Professor Vulakh’s course were transferred to another section, freeing up room for many students on the waitlist to enter Professor Vulakh’s class. Many students failed to see why the waitlisted students were not those that were assigned to a different section of Calculus II.

Kirsten Ondris (CE '19) initiated an online petition on February 9, which gained 74 signatures supporting the claim that “the administra-

tion should NOT be allowed to make alterations to my schedule after the add/drop period (especially without consent from the student).” The petition took a physical form within 2 days, as Mary Dwyer (ChE '19) and Gabriela Godlewski (CE '19), with the help of several others, began circulating physical copies of the petition for students to sign. The physical petition gained 112 signatures from a cohort of 146 engineering students. A meeting was organized by Jeremiah Pratt (EE '19) and Brian Frost (ChE '19) and was attended by many first-year students as well as members of the Engineering Student Council, including Administrative Chair Nick Breaser (ME '16). The meeting was called as an attempt to discuss the issue, share personal accounts and provide possible solutions as well as insight on why this decision was made. At this meeting, it was alleged that the decision of who would be moved from a certain section of Calculus II was decided by check-

ing who got A’s in Calculus I from any section taught by any professor, and moving those people to Professor Mintchev’s section.

As of now, the decision has been overturned and official communication to that effect is expected to arrive soon. In an email to Nick Breaser, Dean Stock called the “paralysis by the various parties involved inexcusable,” and added that there is need for “processes that ensure that this does not happen again.” The proposed solution is to expand Prof. Vulakh’s class size to fit all students that previously attended the class, with the necessary agreement from Department Chair Professor Agrawal and Prof. Vulakh himself. Professor Smyth’s class will also see an increase, but will remain within the legal limit and thus has no need for special agreement. A follow-up on this issue is pending the search for a classroom large enough to accommodate the large class size. ♦

IN SIMPLE TERMS: BILL MEA ON THE BUDGET

PRANAV JONEJA (ME ‘18)

Since last semester, the administration has been somewhat silent on our school’s financial situa- tion. With Acting President Bill Mea’s release of a document aptly-titled “Budget and Financial Projections” on February 18, that silence has now been broken. The ten-page document is densely packed with numbers that Mea crunched himself in his dual role as VP of Finance and Administration. As such, he wrote that the doc- ument “represents my analysis of The Cooper Union’s financial condition, both in terms of its liquidity and the gap we must bridge in order to cease reliance on tuition revenue.”

The document makes a strong effort to be easily understandable in plain English wherever possi- ble. However, given its purpose as a baseline for future planning within the administration, it is necessary that the official document assesses our finances in full technical detail. Taken in a more positive way, it’s good news that the adminis- tration is being both transparent and highly specific by releasing the numbers they are work- ing with themselves.

What follows here is a brief overview of the analyses without any accounting jargon. It is supplemented with direct quotes excerpted from an interview with Bill Mea for *The Pioneer*, providing clarification and further analysis.

It must be said, nevertheless, solely depending on this heavily condensed, ‘tl;dr’ version is not recommended for getting a full picture of the situation.

Overview of Analyses (in simple terms):

In the document, Mea asserts that the amount of money spent annually needs to be reduced by \$3 million by June 2018. Follow- ing his proposal, Mea said “the Board has now made it a requirement to make these expense reductions.” These cuts need to happen in the immediate future. Mea clarified that these cuts could happen in chunks, like the example taken in the document: \$1.5 million in the first year, \$1.5 million in the second year for simplicity in crunching numbers. But he also said that’s not definitive: “If I can cut all \$3 million in this year alone, then [the benefits] just ripple forward.”

To be clear, the announcement right now is that these cuts need to happen, but there’s not a fully realized plan of how to go about mak- ing those cuts. Mea said, “I’ve asked the people who prepare budgets to make a list [of possible areas to make cuts] that adds up to \$3 million.” These ‘people’ are the various academic Deans, members of the President’s cabinet, VP of En-

rollment (Mitchell Lipton), VP of Communica- tions (Justin Harmon) and other administrators. Moving forward, Bill Mea will be working with these people to take on the very tough job of actually deciding where and how to cut \$3 mil- lion right away.

There is something to be said about where these cuts will not be happening. “We’re not looking to cut the number of full-time faculty or reduce their salaries. In fact, we’re hiring more full-time faculty.” Instead, Mea said he is pushing for cuts to be made “more within the administration and away from the academic departments.” In simple terms, this is because a lot of the current budgets for academic spending is comprised of full-time faculty salaries. Since those cannot be cut, it shifts the focus to making cuts in the ad- ministration.

The document frames these cuts in the broader setting of the total gap we must bridge in order to return to free. Bill Mea: “On an annual basis, what do I think it would take to get back to free? About \$15 million. That’s what we call our ‘structural deficit’— though I’m not really a fan of that phrase.” That’s not to say a 15-million- dollar gap is the bottom line to all of Cooper’s problems though. Both in the document and in the interview, Mea made some very significant statements that qualify the question further. For one, calling it a ‘gap’ refers to the fact that it will be filled with a combination of spending cuts and additional revenue. The cuts have to be sustainable though, which means they cannot be “cut now only to be added back later.” More- over, additional revenue needs to come from non-tuition sources. The consent decree, ap- proved in December 2015 by the Supreme Court of the State of New York, legally requires that Cooper Union “develop plans to return to a sus- tainable, full tuition scholarship model.” **Simply put, the problem is not just making sure we bridge that 15-million-dollar gap—it’s ensuring that it’s done in a long-term sus- tainable way without depending on tuition.** The immediate cuts of \$3 million in the next two years will count towards filling the gap.

On the topic of bridging gaps, Cooper Union is currently operating right on the edge of one. Bill Mea: “We’re losing \$20 million this year alone.” That’s an operating loss—money being spent *beyond* what we have money for. So how is Coo- per Union still open? In August 2014, the school borrowed \$50.9 million, commonly referred to as the bridge loan. But that’s not news today, we knew about this loan when it happened and it made big waves at the time. The question since then has been, how effectively is it being

used? In short: that’s cash being spent to keep our doors open and keep students enrolled. But that’s the point of the bridge loan: it is what’s keeping the school open despite massive operat- ing losses every year. Looking forward, Bill Mea projects a \$17 million loss next year and another \$4 million lost the year after that... it’s easy to see how the bridge loan is going to dry up very fast. And it’s one reason Mea points to in saying “I hate to say that’s the reason why we had to take out that loan.”

If everything goes according to the projec- tions, the loan will also just barely bridge us to 2018/2019 when the lease of the land under the Chrysler building steps up to make us cash posi- tive. Indeed, Cooper Union has been anxiously awaiting that Chrysler rent increase for quite some time now. The 2006 loan of \$175 million from MetLife was leveraged against the Chrysler building property—like taking out a mortgage on your home, but the ‘home’ was actually the \$630 million Chrysler building property. But again, the two loans—bridge loan and MetLife loan—are old news. **The point to keep in mind looking for- ward is that paying off those loans—called ‘debt service payments’—will continue to be the single largest expense every year.** Worse yet, those payments are set to increase signifi- cantly from \$13 million a year to \$18 million a year by 2020. Put another way, in 2020 we will pay \$18.5 million in loan repayments, while the cost of running the three schools *combined* will be \$14.5 million. **In simple terms, what kind of college are we if we spend more paying back debt than we do on running our three schools?**

It’s very important to note that our current situ- ation is inherited not by some choice of our own. Both loans were structured in a way that gave immediate financial relief because that’s what the Campbell and Bharucha administrations had said was needed when they signed the loans. The tradeoff, however, is that the bulk of repayments were deferred to the future, which actually ends up costing us more in the long run.

Acting President Bill Mea is taking on this mat- ter head-on while maintaining a positive outlook overall. His analyses show that it may be possible to “ensure future financial sustainability without charging undergraduate tuition.” The assump- tions he makes are conservative and the risks he outlines are realistic. Ultimately, the conclu- sion he comes to in this document is that we may just make it out alright. Certainly, that’s what is needed. ♦

DAMAGE AND DEFACEMENT: HEADACHE FOR BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

MATTHEW GRATTAN (ChE ‘19)

Maintenance and repairs are a crucial part of build- ing management, but re- peated instances of dam- age—whether accidental or intentional—can become quite bothersome for Build- ings and Grounds. Some incidents include: broken blinds, damaged seats in the Rose Auditorium, and a fractured glass pane on the exterior of the New Aca- demic Building.

According to Carmelo Piz- zuto, the Acting Director of Facilities Management, 41 Cooper Square has seen nu- merous repairs over the past few weeks. For example, the blinds on some of the NAB doors have required replacement several times due to repeated damage. In the Rose Auditorium, the folding seats face heavy us- age, and in some cases, the entire seat back can fall off due to excessive strain on the metal supports.

Frequent repairs can incur high costs to the school, but so can cracked win- dow panes on the outside of 41 Cooper Square. The replacement of one of the large ground floor windows cost the school approxi- mately \$11,000, according to Mr. Pizzuto.

Items that disappear en- tirely are as equally prob- lematic as damage. Elevator buttons, faucets, and even shelving brackets have gone missing recently. Elevator riders may have noticed a missing 8th floor button in one of the elevators of the NAB. The removal of eleva- tor buttons (as well as the bulbs behind them) can be a nuisance to those who wish to go to a particular floor. In addition, parts of faucets or even entire faucets have been removed without prior authorization. New touch- less faucets are expensive replacements.

Brackets used to hold shelves were also removed from the Pioneer office. While the brackets were not in use, it is indeed un- settling that items can be taken from a locked room with neither prior notifica- tion nor a reason why.

In short, the damage or defacement of facilities at Cooper affects everyone in the Cooper community. Unintentional damage to a widely used building like 41 Cooper Square is nearly impossible to avoid, but perhaps missing faucets and shelving brackets can be avoided. “We don’t want to point fingers,” said Mr. Pizzuto, “We just want to tell the community what is going on.”

Instances of damage can be reported to Buildings and Grounds. The Buildings and Grounds office is located in 41 Cooper Square, room 111.



Top: Senior girls on the basketball team, all smiles after the final game of the season repping Cooper. Left to right: Nina Berlow, Antonia Stoyanovich, Jamie Chan, and Kayla Weg.

Left: Jamie Chan brings her A-game.

Photos by Wentao Zhang (ChE ‘19).

SASE COMES TO COOPER

ANUSHREE SREEDHAR (ChE '18)



Photo provided by Sara Wong (ChE '17).

Pioneers Ashmera Mohammad (ChE '16) and Tiffany Tang (ChE '16) jumpstarted SASE, Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers, this semester at Cooper. SASE is an organization that strives to allow Asian engineers to harness and develop their professional abilities.

Co-founder of Cooper's SASE chapter, Ashmera said "I think it's important to have SASE at our school so that we can bridge the gap between different types of Asian heritage individuals. We also want to encourage students to attend networking events and meet more professionals and fellow students who share similar interests. I don't want SASE to just be a chance to go to just another career fair. I want it to be an opportunity to interact with other people at various stages in their lives who share similar stories either as Asians, as engineers/scientists, or as both."

SASE had their Northeast Regional Conference at Northeastern University in Boston this year. Although the biting Boston weather was bitter and cold, the conference was teeming with active students attending productive workshops, resume reviews, and networking with each other. The conference featured many prominent speakers from various companies and diverse parts of industry who spoke to help us embrace and enhance our Asian-American pride while also enabling us to build our leadership skills through interactive activities. The leaders of SASE did not hesitate to employ play-doh and paper airplanes as

tools to get the students involved. The conference concluded with remarkable performances from the Asian heritage clubs at Northeastern University and a career fair attended by over 20 companies including GE, Boston Scientific, P&G, and Jacobs.

"I want it to be an opportunity to interact with other people at various stages in their lives who share similar stories either as Asians, as engineers/scientists, or as both."

- Ashmera Mohammad

"The most memorable part was seeing just how big SASE was—even at a regional level. Since Cooper is such a small school you sometimes feel that there are very few people with your interests and background, but going to the conference you realize that there are lots of others who share your same interests and background," said Tiffany Tang, co-found of the SASE chapter at Cooper.

To join, search SASE on the JAC page (jac.cooper.edu) or speak to one of the board members: Ashmera Mohammad (ChE '16), Tiffang Tang (ChE '16), Sara Wong (ChE '17), Anushree Sreedhar (ChE '18), Krishna Thiyagarajan (EE '18). ♦

JSC DIGEST

DANIEL GALPERIN (ChE '18)

On Tuesday February 16, a Joint Student Council (JSC) meeting was held to discuss several issues pertaining to the student body. The meeting was chaired by the Art Student Council and attended by 37 students, mostly student council members with a few non-student council members present in an attempt to stay informed about current issues at Cooper. Dean Chamberlin was also present.

The meeting began with a discussion of the electoral process of the next Student Trustee and discussion also involved some potential duties of the Student Trustee. The goal of the discussion was to create an agreed upon basis for a document to be drafted by the Administrative Chairs. This document is to be drafted in the week following the Tuesday JSC meeting and would be presented to the entire Cooper Union community. At that point, the community would have about a week to respond to the document and afterwards, JSC would motion to pass the document in the form of a resolution. This resolution would formalize a selection process for the next Trustee and make clear the expectations of the student-body on the next Trustee once they are chosen. In the case that this resolution becomes the basis for defining duties and selecting a Trustee, JSC will review the procedure annually.

A general procedure for a Student Trustee's nomination, election and duration of term were agreed upon at the meeting. An important point about the selection process was whether a Trustee should be selected from the same school as the previous Trustee. With regards to elections, JSC agreed that the number of popular votes should be forwarded to the BoT with the names of candidates. This information should be publicized so that the student body can be sure that the BoT selects the candidate with the most popular support.

Certain operational duties of the next Student Trustees were also brought up. There was a suggestion that the Trustee hold an open-forum style meeting before and after every BoT meeting. The idea is that a forum before the BoT meeting allows the Student Trustee to gain insight on the issues faced by the student body, so that these concerns can be relayed effectively to the BoT as necessary. The forum that would follow a BoT meeting would act to inform the students of how their concerns were received and perhaps what other issues were being discussed. It was also suggested that a Student Trustee should step down from their duties in student council in order to focus on their role as a Trustee.

The guidelines proposed at this meeting were voted upon for consensus at the end of the discussion. They were agreed upon unanimously as a base point for a drafted document to be produced by the administrative chairs.

"This resolution would formalize a selection process and make clear the expectations of the student-body on the next Trustee once they are chosen"

While the topic of the next Student Trustee dominated the majority of the duration of the meeting, other topics were brought up as well. Dean Chamberlin introduced an Open Mic Night for students to have an opportunity to engage the community in a personal setting, as opposed to online, about issues at Cooper. Issues open for discussion would include harassment, assault, and gender-neutral bathrooms and can further include any issues that the community faces.

A petition was also presented from a group of concerned students demanding the diversification of the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) department. The HSS department is hiring full-time faculty for the first time in 25 years, which provides the opportunity for change to what petitioning students consider a very limited, Eurocentric and cis-sexual curriculum.

The official minutes of the meeting are available online on the recently created "Joint Student Council" Facebook page. Please contact your student council representative with any thoughts, concerns or questions on any of the topics mentioned in this article or about any other issues. ♦

THE ENTITLED GENERATION, OR HOW I LEARNED TO STOP FACEBOOK POSTING AND LOVE THE CAMPAIGN

MICHAEL PASTERNAK (ME '17)

It's not your fault. Yes, despite what you might have heard on the news, from your parents and grandparents, online, *it is not your fault*. The political system we have inherited is, by all quantitative metrics, built to suppress not just the youth vote, but any voice of dissidence whatsoever.

Youth voter turnout during the last midterm elections was 19.9%, compared to the average of 26.6% from the past 40 years, according to a Washington Post article from this year. In most campaigns, there is barely even an attempt to garner youth votes, with budgets being overwhelmingly used to target more reliable voting groups rather than what is seen as an apathetic and uninvolved generation. Part of what that implies is true, there's no reliable way to keep track and spend money on the youth vote. A lot of students and young voters haven't really settled in a single location and it can be difficult to use targeted TV ads, mailings, and even emails in order to reach potential voters. That's a simple reality which should be acknowledged. However, I would argue that in some ways, that gives our generation a political advantage, one that we are simply not using.

More than half of millennials claim that a majority of content they post online is political in nature. In other words, our social media has replaced TV ads and mailings in terms of the political conversation that we engage in. We are far more active than prior generations in terms of how we ab-

sorb political information, which, while presenting us an opportunity to be better informed than ever before, can be a double-edged sword. As I'm sure many of us are aware, Facebook and other social media sites curate content based on what you are more likely to click, and the reality of that system is that what we agree with ends up being what we see more of. The challenging but necessary reality of politics is that contention is not only healthy, but required. Oftentimes, it is easier and simpler to not even begin a contentious conversation, to put your name and face behind a cause or a candidate, but if we do not, then others will in our place.

"The political system we have inherited is built to suppress not just the youth vote, but any voice of dissidence whatsoever"

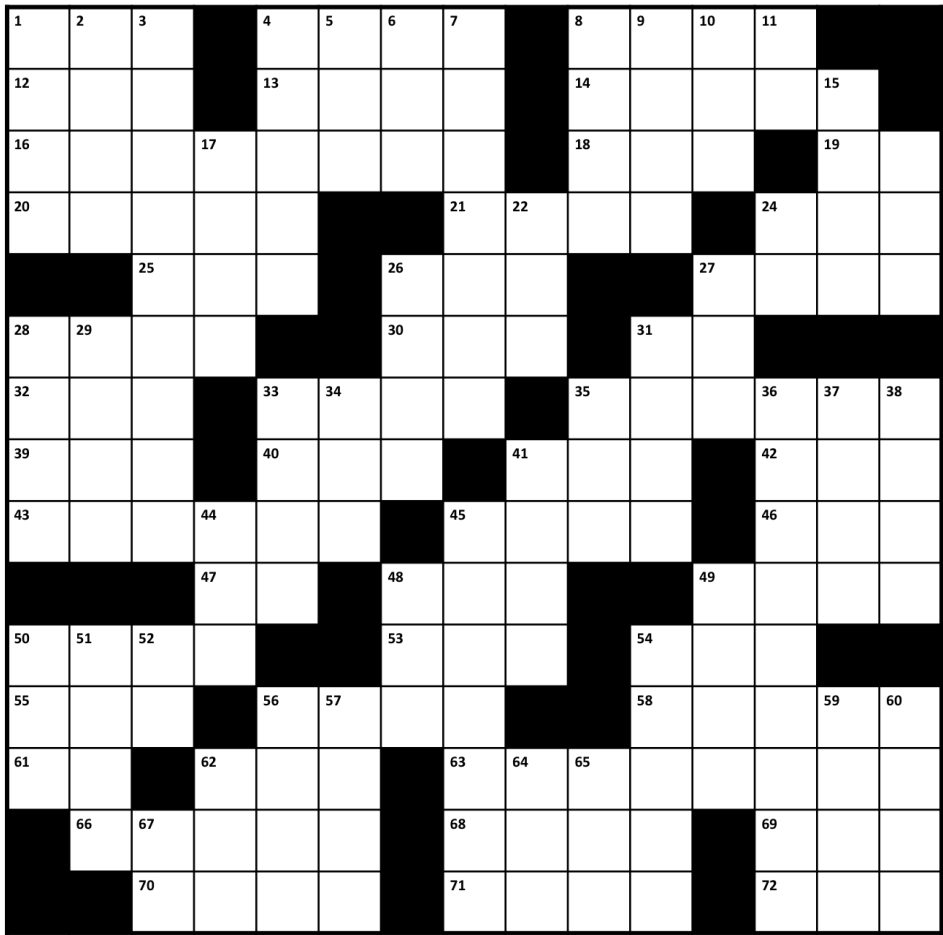
Right now the youth are being completely ignored in our national, state, and (even more so) local politics because we are not turning out to vote. In fact, the current framework of state and local elections allows just a single person to pump enough money into advertisements and in-person canvassing that they are the only voice left and they will win by default.

Simply put, we are the answer to that problem. Only the youth have the sort of organic, transparency granting tools that can reform a system that refuses to reform itself. This year, more canvassing apps, websites, and social media pushes have been generated at the grassroots level, as opposed to created artificially by campaigns and special interests, than ever before in history. These tools and efforts have an undeniable impact; this national election has already proven that the previous standards aren't really as implacable or invincible as was previously thought.

In other words, *your vote does matter* and your voice matters even more. My call to all of you is not just to get involved with school politics which so clearly and immediately effect your life, but to look into local and state candidates, and to make sure that you both know how to vote for the presidential race and for the midterm elections. In each generation, there is a wave of political vigor which has always produced a great deal of positive change. *We can all be that change*. Do not let the stereotypes for millennials get in the way of persuading and arguing for what you want to see in the world, rather than assuming that someone else will argue for you. ♦

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

TOBY STEIN (CE ‘18)



- ACROSS**

1: Cooper Union Admissions

4: Abbrev. group of certified accountants

8: Direxion Daily stock ticker

12: Cremation vase

13: NBC today show host

14: Drink garnish

16: Cooper topic of discussion

18: Prank

19: Pound

21: Excuse

22: Abbrev. Insurance plan option

24: Caviar brand

25: Span. Two

26: International Space Station

27: Bowed

28: Bushy dos, informal

30: Japanese carp

31: __ and behold
- 33: Subatomic particle

35: Possible

39: Shakespearean exclamation

40: __ Eisenbahm. Train operator

41: Eastern European country abbrev.

42: Banish

43: Having a handle

45: Good lookin’

46: Sister Sledge biggest hit, middle word

47: Exist

48: Mass. State tree

49: __ Shan, Chinese mountain range

50: Lent, Hopkins, Cusack’s domain

53: Cut

54: Zero star review

55: Mental health org.

56: Cam’s craze

58: Is Joe Flacco __?

61: Et __ Brute
- 62: Godfather prefix

63: Dermatologist specialty

66: Christian martyr

68: Art of Dram. Writing: Author

69: Cilantro, first three letters

70: Military units Abbrev.

71: Highest level business degree

72: Distress

- DOWN**
- 1: No more embargo
- 2: ‘Risk’ location. East Eur. mountain range
- 3: Cures
- 4: The crossword’s biggest critic. __ Curro
- 5: Gotta take a “Number 2”
- 6: Much __ About Nothing
- 7: 1984 NBA Rookie of the Year

FOUNDER’S DAY, PETER COOPER’S 225TH BIRTHDAY

ASANTÉ MILLS (Art ‘19)



Left to right: Terry Brown, great-great-great grandson of Peter Cooper; Acting President Bill Mea; and Board Chairman Richard Lincer. Photo by Winter Leng (ChE ‘18).

A cold wind carried over the huddled crowd. The podium ignited with a distinct electronic feedback as Peter Cooper’s great-great-great-grandson, Terry Brown, spoke on behalf of his ancestor’s legacy. Magnitudes of gratitude and respect flooded as Mr. Brown delivered his speech, in which he touched on Peter Cooper’s contribution to education and technological innovation in lower Manhattan and the United States of America.

After that, CUAA President Nils Folke Anderson took the podium, speaking about his desire for The Cooper Union Annual Fund to be increased through alumni participation. Acting President Bill Mea also noted on the long and vibrant history of The Cooper Union, and ended his speech on an optimistic note, attempting to dispel upset about the current financial challenges. Later, everyone regrouped in the Foundation Building for the alumni mixer. In all we were left to feel optimistic about the changes to come to Cooper Union in the return to a tuition-free format and the added support from the alumni association.

- 8: Company/brand symbol

9: Woe is me, exclamation

10: B in “The BFG”

11: Type of light

15: __ Musk

17: UK Banking and Insurance Co.

20. Wager

22: Pascal’s equivalent

24: Concerning

26: Religious image

27: Constrictor

28: Soccer’s governing body

29: Devastate

31: Water flower

33: SolidWorks command,
- to join pieces together

34: Guitar’s little brother

35: Popular news site

36: Childish term: nerds

37: Former Ital. currency

38: Heaven on Earth

41: Ceremonial splendor

44: Honest US president

45: Practiced oral hygiene

48: Jujube tree

49: Soothing application

50: Feline

51: __ Dei, Roman Catholic Institution

52: Russian ‘yes’

54: __ stronger than sword
- 56: Common contraction

57: Tiny colonists

59: Threesome

60: Slippery swimmers

62: Mold or Random Number generator

64: 007’s adversary

65: 401(K) Alternative

67: Current era

MILES OF MOVIES: TOP MOVIES TO LOOK OUT FOR (OR NOT!)

MILES BARBER (CE ‘18)

Hail, Caesar!

Hail, Caesar! is a film comprised of a few days in the life of Mr. Maddox (Josh Brolin), a film production supervisor, who is charged with fixing various issues in the films being produced by Capital Pictures, a 1950s Hollywood studio. Through the eyes of Mr. Maddox, we see so many different actors, sets, and types of issues a 1950s production might face. This allows the film to show entire scenes from certain ‘films’ and just allow you to be entranced by old-style movies. Each scene is incredibly well-acted and well-intentioned, as you can see different aspects of old Hollywood, such as the Western, the English Drama, the Biblical Epic, and the Musical, each in a perfectly contained scene.

The acting in each of the scenes and the way in which Mr. Maddox’ various problems come about are also statements about

actors, directors, writers, and production. A standout performance was from Alden Ehrenreich, who plays Hobie Doyle, an actor used to playing cowboys in Westerns, who must now act in an English Drama. His hilarious southern American accent perfectly fights the British accent of Ralph Fiennes, who directs the drama. Another standout was Channing Tatum, perfectly cast as a sailor in a musical scene that might have been my favorite in the entire film; it is probably five minutes of pure energy that could only be found in an older movie or a Broadway show.

The other scenes exhibit different, but still very enjoyable aspects of old. *Hail, Caesar!* is at its best when it lets you sit back and enjoy a standalone scene. If you try to figure out what this entire movie is about, however, you don’t find much. The actual ‘plot’ of this film is so uneven and all over the place that I was most-

ly just confused. The film will go from light-hearted Hollywood scene to something that you’re supposed to take seriously, and the tone shift just seems like the movie that was playing got shut off and replaced with an entirely different movie. If you ignore what is actually happening in the movie and focus on the little movies within the movie (the movies that are being produced), you’ll find a lot to enjoy. But the story connecting the scenes together is just so bizarre and random that it really brings the movie down. Some bits are hilarious, but most are just a little bit boring, even if Josh Brolin, whose Mr. Maddox character connects everything, is doing his absolute best.

In the end, *Hail, Caesar!* has a lot to love in scenes here and there, but was incapable of seaming them together to create a great movie. Anybody who doesn’t find the allure of old Hollywood interesting will find little

to like in this film. I really do, so I can still call *Hail, Caesar!* a mild success. But this is definitely not going to win over everyone.

Total: 6/10

Deadpool

Deadpool is a ridiculous, self-aware, self-deprecating superhero film about Wade Wilson, a hit-man of sorts who falls in love with a stripper and is stricken with cancer (not as a result but, you know, he just was). So he undergoes a special surgery that turns him into Deadpool, an indestructible, self-healing mutant. Unfortunately, the procedure severely damages his appearance, so much so that he’s ashamed to go visit his fiancé.

The beginning of this movie does a really great job of showing us what the character is like, while mixing in bits of his backstory. It

tells the two stories in such a way that the story never drags but is actually benefited from the additional knowledge you now have from the backstory bits. The backstory bits usually don’t last that long, at least until you get to Wilson’s procedure. This clip has a lot of real, scary and serious drama that really worked for me, because it’s unexpected in a movie like this. What the villain, Ajax, does to Wade Wilson to turn him into Deadpool is scary, and the movie doesn’t hold back on the drama, the same way it doesn’t hold back on the violence or the profanity.

Now, the film has copious amounts of both physical and verbal comedy. The physical comedy is incredibly effective, with almost all of the jokes landing. The verbal comedy was a little spottier. Some of it was great, especially the self-referential bits where Deadpool makes fun of the X-Men, or other superheroes, or Hugh Jackman (a

lot of that). Other times though, it doesn’t work as well. Since the movie relies completely on these quips landing so that it can be entertaining, these moments when the jokes don’t land really halt the movie.

When you strip the movie of the jokes and the violence, there isn’t a whole lot there (except for the good drama in the middle that I mentioned). The camerawork is pretty average and the effects are pretty mediocre, which is to be expected given this film’s small budget when compared to its scale. So it’s a good thing the film was as entertaining as it was. Overall, *Deadpool* managed to make me care about an anti-hero of sorts with moments of great drama that get mixed in with ridiculous action, physical humor, and some great jokes. The movie was short, didn’t tell much of a story, but made what it had count.

Total: 8/10

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT FUTURE FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

PRANAV JONEJA (ME '18)

Earlier this week, Acting President Bill Mea published a document about Cooper Union's "Budget and Financial Projections" in a campus notice email on February 18. The audience the document is intended to reach includes everyone—students, faculty, staff, alumni—and inevitably people outside the Cooper community too. In particular, the analysis within the document has profound implications for students' futures. Based on that document, The Pioneer has included an analysis tailored specifically for students below

Tuition costs

When asked about the continuation of the tuition model until 2020 as projected in the document, Mea confirmed that "it will remain in effect. Right now, we have no intention changing it." As such, in sticking with the current tuition model, the sticker price of attending Cooper will continue to increase by 3% per year due to inflation.

However, there are some projected changes. The document highlights differences between the current analysis and the Financial Sustainability Plan (FSP) devised under the Bharucha administration. For one, Mea anticipates a "78.3% average tuition discount" across all students combined, which is slightly higher than Jamshed's FSP.

After considering the infamous "sliding scale"—variations in the out-of-pocket cost of attending—here is the simplest way of understanding what's going to happen over the next few years: 25% of students will be Pell-eligible and receive full tuition scholarships with government assistance. The remaining 75% of students will pay "some tuition", on average \$11,500 this year, followed by \$11,800, \$12,200, \$12,500 and so on, increasing every year to reflect inflation.

Quality of students

As explained on the left, the current analysis estimates greater tuition discount than previously planned. The document itself suggests one reason for this: "the lower net tuition pricing in the current analysis reflects concerns about the ability to achieve [attract] the same high level of student quality."

Bill Mea conceded that, during the initial discussions in 2013 about charging tuition at all, there was "a fear that we were going to dilute the academic excellence of our students by charging tuition. A fear that we might now be letting in anybody who could pay. From what I've seen in the statistics and from talking to faculty, we've not diluted the quality of the students. Still, there remains a fear that if we consider charging more, the really 'top' students may choose to go somewhere else and pay less." When pressed further about how "statistics and discussions with faculty" supports his claim, he elaborated that the statistics he referred to were SAT scores. Indeed, SAT scores have remained roughly at the same high historic levels. Still, Mea did concede that "SAT scores are also a really good indicator of how wealthy you are."

'Historic Enrollment'

In this context, 'historic enrollment' is a special term, originally brought about as a legal matter in the Consent Decree, which states that the Board must make good-faith efforts to "return Cooper Union to a sustainable, full tuition scholarship model in [all] programs at their historic levels of enrollment." The Consent Decree is legally binding since being approved in the state Supreme Court in December 2015.

Despite the formalism around the phrase, determining what 'historic enrollment' actually means quantitatively is left a little ambiguous. For the purposes of financial projections and future planning, Mea's document considers historic enrollment to be the following: 65 in art, 32 in architecture, and 32 in each of the four engineering majors. Thus, the total entering class size is 225. These figure will guide the Office of Admissions moving forward.

Mea's analysis accounts for a "retention rate of 87%" by graduation time—an unfortunate reality of student life. To make maximum use of Cooper's resources, 12 additional students are accepted as transfers. This is a conservative estimate.



EPISODE TWENTY EIGHT

"GROUNDHOG DAY"



JAKE POTTER (ME '16)