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# *The Pioneer*

## **HAPPY**

## **THANKSGIVING!**



## AFTER TUITION PART II: A SILVER LINING

MATTHEW GRATTAN (ChE ‘19)

The Pioneer interviewed Vice President of Enrollment Services Mitchell Lipton and Interim Director of Finance and Administration Keith Stokeld about changes at Cooper Union since charging tuition.

### Admissions

Immediately after charging tuition, Cooper had to scramble for a larger applicant pool. According to Vice President of Enrollment Services Mitchell Lipton, “if you all of a sudden go from \$0 to \$20 thousand, there’s going to be an impact.”

The administration anticipated a significant decrease in the number of applicants after the decision to charge tuition in April 2013 and quickly began recruitment overseas.

“We were given a clear mandate from [former President Bharucha] to do everything we could to maintain the quality of the applicant pool, so we could continue to have the same kinds of students come to Cooper,” Lipton said. “We didn’t have enough time to really think, other than just say, ‘we have to do everything we can’”

In addition to recruiting engineering applicants abroad, Cooper expanded preexisting relationships at STEM oriented schools in other parts of the US.

Prior to charging tuition, just 5% of students reported home addresses outside of the US; after tuition, that number increased to 11%. This observed increase in the number of international students seems to have taken place predominantly in the engineering school.

Is there a trend? Perhaps not. So far this year, Cooper has not visited schools abroad. Recruitment strategies change from year to year and so do the culture and administration at Cooper. “We were

in a situation in 2014 where we had to go with what we thought the school wanted. The school didn’t have a vision at that point—other than ‘we want to survive,’” explained Lipton. Cooper is now in a position to determine its course over the next several years, and that could impact the recruitment process.

While the art and architecture schools attract some applicants from abroad, neither school seems to recruit overseas aggressively. Instead, recruiters from the art school—and more recently, the architecture school—attend National Portfolio Days around the US to attract prospective students.

In general, Cooper has seen a decrease in the number of first-year applications, but the School of Art seemed to be affected the most with a 30% decrease in applicants versus drops of around 10% for the engineering and architecture schools. However, retention rates have remained about the same.

### Finance

Over the past decade or so, Cooper has struggled with not having enough revenue to meet expenses. According to Interim Director of Finance and Administration Keith Stokeld, “After years of \$15 and \$20 million deficits, we’ve got a hole of about \$180 million that needs to be refilled in order to get back on a solid footing.”

In the past, strategies to address budget deficits were focused around selling assets and incurring debts. Not addressing the problem adequately early on led to dire financial straits. The decision to charge tuition could be seen as a last-ditch effort at fiscal responsibility. Ultimately to return to free, Cooper Union needs to increase revenues while decreasing expenses, and that appears to be the current strategy.

Tuition is one way to fill that hole in Cooper’s finances, and it constitutes 15% of the school’s total income. Payments go towards a general revenue pool, along with income from investments, contributions, and rental payments. Tuition is a consequence of previous financial trends, and it’s too soon yet to see long term effects, especially amidst larger financial restructuring.

Investments—namely the land underneath the Chrysler building—constitute 60% of Cooper’s income. In fact, the rent for the land is set to increase incrementally over the next several years. The first of these increases is due in January 2018 and will allow Cooper to have budget surpluses in the near future.

However, these budget surpluses do not mean that we can immediately return to free: the institution needs to establish financial health for the long term. Current projections in the Free Education Committee’s January 2017 progress report show that Cooper could return to free by 2039.

Under the direction of President Laura Sparks, Cooper is also trying to engage the community for more donations which are currently 15% of the school’s income. (The remaining 10% of the school’s income comes from other sources like the residence hall.)

While yearly donations have averaged around \$9 million over the last five years, they’ve also ranged from \$5.5 million to \$16.8 million.

“We believe that Cooper alumni and other people in the Cooper community could be challenged to do a lot more in support of the school financially,” said Stokeld. “It’s as if everyone assumed that we never had to ask people for money. We had this huge endowment and we were set, so iron-

ically Cooper has never really developed a robust fundraising program.” Donations are a significant part of Cooper’s financial strategy moving forward.

***It’s hard to ignore the fact that tuition is a financial transaction. If customers pay a premium, what services do they expect in return?***

### Expectations?

A recurring question regarding tuition is whether or not the academic quality of Cooper students has changed. According to data on high school grade averages and standardized test scores, it hasn’t. However, that doesn’t rule out the possibility that tuition has altered the relationship between students and Cooper Union.

In fact, tuition has caused the administration to reexamine how it operates. “A sort of silver-lining to the tuition change is that it forced us to improve things that we should have looked at years ago,” explained Lipton. He added that the administration is trying to “look at everything we do through the lens of a student.”

It’s hard to ignore the fact that tuition is a financial transaction, and there are unspoken expectations associated with it—even with something as abstract as education. If customers pay a premium, what services do they expect in return?

From the administration’s point of view, it seems that nothing like that is observed. “I don’t see the students being any more demanding at all,” said Lipton, “I don’t see tuition impacting that.” ♦

## IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

YUQIAO WANG (ChE ‘19)

Professor Savizky was recently appointed as the Safety Director of The Cooper Union and The Pioneer sat with him to discuss the safety and evacuation procedures.

When asked about the evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency, Professor Savizky said “it’s impractical to use the empty field in front of NAB or Cooper Square due to insufficient capacity to accommodate everyone.” As of now, in the event of a localized emergency students may be asked to move to another Cooper building like the Foundation Building to 41 Cooper Square. In the event of a campus-wide emergency, students may be asked to relocate to Washington Square Park. In the case of a fire, people in 41 Cooper would primarily assemble at St. Mark’s Place between Cooper Square and 2nd Avenue, and, if necessary, assemble at East 5th Street between Bowery and 2nd

Avenue. In some emergency situations, like an active shooting, people are asked to stay in place.

As of now, it takes all the people in 41 Cooper about five to six minutes to evacuate which according to Professor Savizky is “not quite fast, but fairly swift enough given that we don’t have sufficient open field.” The fire drills are meant to be unannounced so planning is kept to a minimum. The administration wants them to be at a time when the majority of the students would be in the building, for example in the middle of the morning or afternoon.

In terms of security of the building, Professor Savizky commented that all the windows, doors and the outer wall of the new academic building are simply ground glass, not bulletproof. This can be a major risk when an active shooter is around; replacing all the ordinary

ground glass with bulletproof glass is neither economically nor technically feasible.

The smoke detector, carbon monoxide detector, thermal sensor and the firehose are all normally functioning. During the fire drills there have been some issues with audio and strobe lights not working properly, but these issues are being resolved. In general, the evacuation times are good, but “there is always room for improvement!”

At the moment, Professor Savizky is working with the administration, Buildings and Grounds staff, and Terry Collander the deputy fire safety director, to update the “What to do in an Emergency” pamphlet. The current version of the pamphlet is available at the front desk and a comprehensive, campus-wide distribution of the modified brochure will be avail-

able in the near future. There are plans to create a Campus Safety Advisory Committee, primarily led by the safety director. This committee is expected to include faculty, staff, and students and will review and improve the current campus security policies and procedures. In a few weeks, the Crime Prevention Officer from the 9th Precinct will be reassessing the sufficiency and placement of our security cameras.

As a closing comment, Professor Savizky said “I think as students you should be able to perform your duties in a safe environment. We have a network of hardworking people at Cooper who make that happen like President Sparks, Keith Stokeld, deans, technicians, and buildings and grounds personnel. Of course, being a good Samaritan can help—to quote Homeland Security, if you see something, say something!” ♦

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Questions? Concerns? Email The Pioneer at [pioneer@cooper.edu](mailto:pioneer@cooper.edu) or visit LL217.



# THE COOPER STORY: “TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE COOPER UNION...”

AFSHIN KHAN (CE ‘19)

On April 29, 1859, Peter Cooper and his wife, Sarah Cooper, bestowed upon The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art both the property and land that currently houses the Foundation Building. The Deed of Trust was followed by a personal letter that Peter Cooper wrote to the trustees of the institution. It was not until 97 years later, in 1956, that the letter was published in a pamphlet, to remind its readers of Peter Cooper’s vision for the institution. Cooper is quick to point out that the entire basis for founding a new school

was in the hope that “unnumbered youth [would] receive the inspiration of truth in all its native power and beauty”. Although the letter is meant to address the trustees, it speaks more about the mission statement for the institution, offers solutions to societal problems at the time, and touches on what Peter Cooper hoped the institution could achieve.

Throughout the letter, Peter Cooper writes of his desire to inspire truth, encourage heroic virtues, and unite all in a common

effort to elevate the human race. These desires indicate the importance of knowledge. In the earlier half of his letter, he writes that the professors and instructors at Cooper Union are of the “highest moral worth, talents and capacity.” He states how the mission of an exemplary professor is to communicate a knowledge of science in a welcoming manner. Interestingly, Cooper also mentions what to do with incompetent professors. He writes “it is my earnest desire that such professor...shall be promptly removed.”

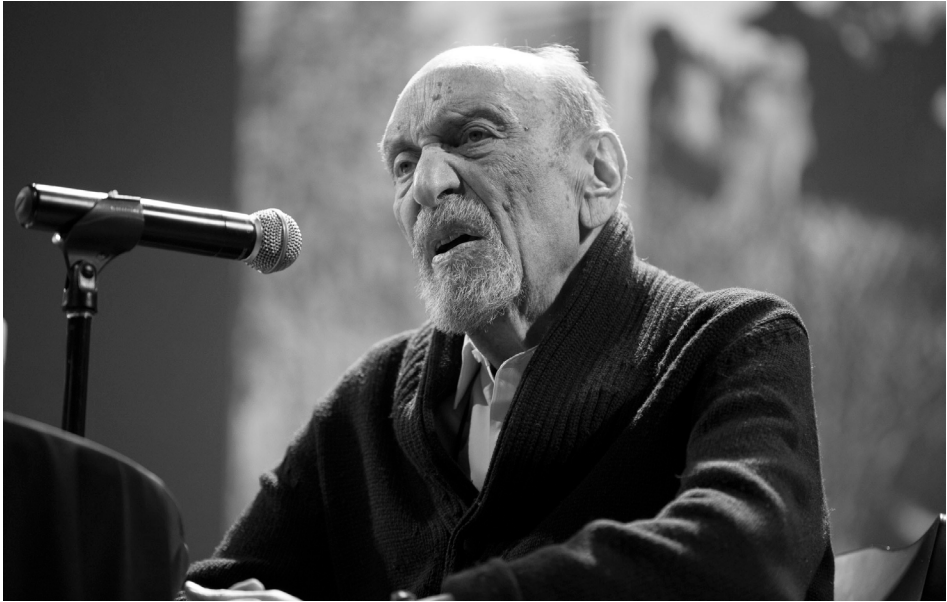
Cooper’s letter also touches on solutions to societal problems at the time. Rather than simply state a desire to improve the lives of disenfranchised portions of society, Cooper offers concrete solutions. For instance, he states a need to apportion \$250 yearly (over \$7,000 today) to support students at the Female School of Design. He also writes “In order to better [their] condition... I desire the trustees to appropriate out of the rents of the building fifteen hundred dollars annually towards meeting the expenses of said school.” It is important to remember that

Cooper, in a letter for a limited audience accompanying the Deed of Trust, offers unexpected solutions to the injustices, such as unequal representation, that women faced in the mid-19th century. Rather than just talk about the aspirations of the school, he offers actual solutions.

Although the latter half of Cooper’s letter to the trustees grows increasingly religious, he concludes his letter with a rather secular message: that knowledge will cover the earth. Although he does state that the institution should help guide the youth away from the dangers that they are perpetually exposed to, he also states that goodness must come from within. At the end of the letter rests his signature, marking the beginning of the Cooper Union’s existence. The question that remains, however, is how have we lived up to Peter Cooper’s expectations? ♦

Photo source: [groupaffect.files.wordpress.com](http://groupaffect.files.wordpress.com). The Deed of Trust and the letter to the Board of Trustees can be found at [library.coopr.edu](http://library.coopr.edu).

## MILTON GLASER (ART ‘51) DISCUSSES “THE DESIGN OF DISSENT”



Milton Glaser (Art ‘51) at The Great Hall on November 13. He, along with designer Steven Heller, discussed the updated version of his book *The Design of Dissent* which is now subtitled “Greed, Nationalism, Alternative Facts and the Resistance.” Photo Courtesy of The Cooper Union/Photo by Marget Long.



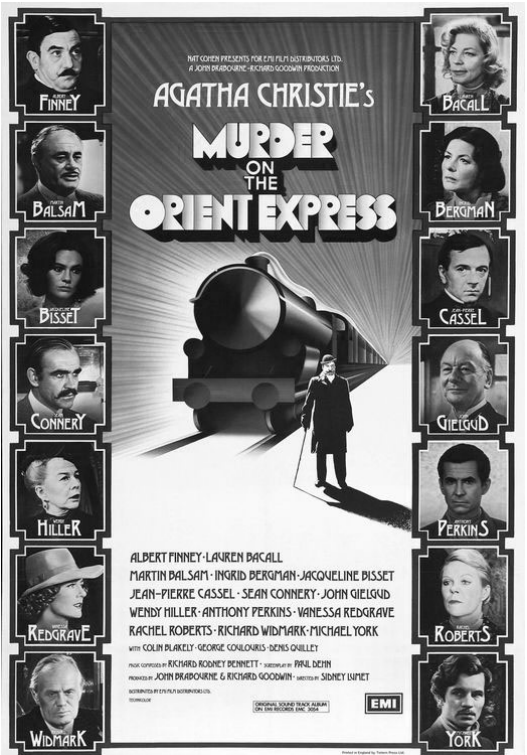
# MILES OF MOVIES: MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

MILES BARBER (CE ‘18)

**THEN (1974)**  
*Murder on the Orient Express* (1974) is about the passengers on a train headed across the Eurasian country. On board is Hercule Poirot (Albert Finney), a Belgian detective who is traveling with his friend who owns the train line. When one of the passengers asks for Poirot’s protection, Poirot declines out of a lack of interest. But the passenger ends up dead the next morning so Poirot must deduce who among the crew’s many characters was the killer.

The mystery of this film is very well executed and took some truly genius writing to pull off given all of the characters. Unfortunately, you really have to wait a long time for the film to actually get to the murder. There are so many characters that it’s difficult to really know where the story is going until the murder takes place. Once that is done, this film is captivating all the way to the end. The way the writers control information is fantastic, and the film’s confined location helps keep things tidy and neat. The film feels very theatrical and would make for a good play. It was no surprise for me to then learn that it’s based on a famous novel. Without spoiling anything, the film comes up with a genius way to tie everything together such that all of the information that has been presented is used in the conclusion of the story. I genuinely did not see the ending coming and was very impressed once all had been revealed.

Part of this film’s claim to fame is its all-star cast. I’ve mentioned Albert Finney, but this film also stars Lauren Bacall, Ingrid Bergman, Sean Connery, Vanessa Redgrave, and Anthony Perkins, among others. They



Source: IMP Awards

help keep the film from being confusing by giving each character a unique personality. Even with over a dozen characters, the film is pretty coherent because of how easy it is to tell each character apart. The characters give fantastic performances in their small parts and help make the film memorable.

Overall, I found this film slow at the beginning but captivating once it takes off. The way this film meticulously ties everything together is so brilliant and makes you want to watch the film a second time just to catch all of the clues. As I said, the film does take a little while to get going, but stick with it and you won’t be disappointed. ♦

Grade: B+



Source: IMDb

**NOW (2017)**  
*Murder on the Orient Express* (2017) is the remake of the popular 1974 film adaptation of Agatha Christie’s book of the same name. The story is the same: Hercule Poirot (Kenneth Branagh) must solve a murder mystery when his train is stuck due to bad weather and a man is murdered in the night.

In the 1974 version, you really had no idea what was going on until the end; it was incredibly difficult to piece everything together by yourself even though all of the information that is eventually used in the end to solve the mystery is available to you. Hercule Poirot figures out the mystery by getting evidence from, not what the suspects say, but how they say it. Even though

you didn’t really know the answer to the puzzle, the film kept you engaged by all of the terrific performances and the fantastic writing.

In this version, the answer is so much easier to figure out since the mystery is so much simpler. There is a lot of sloppiness about the clues and evidence in this film. Things are said in this film that completely give away the ending. The conclusion is so much more predictable that you’re waiting for Hercule Poirot to catch up to you, not the other way around. What keeps it entertaining (because the mystery isn’t really that great this time) is the lead performance from Kenneth Branagh (who also directs) as Hercule Poirot. He seems to be having a fantastic time in the role and you can’t keep your eyes off him.

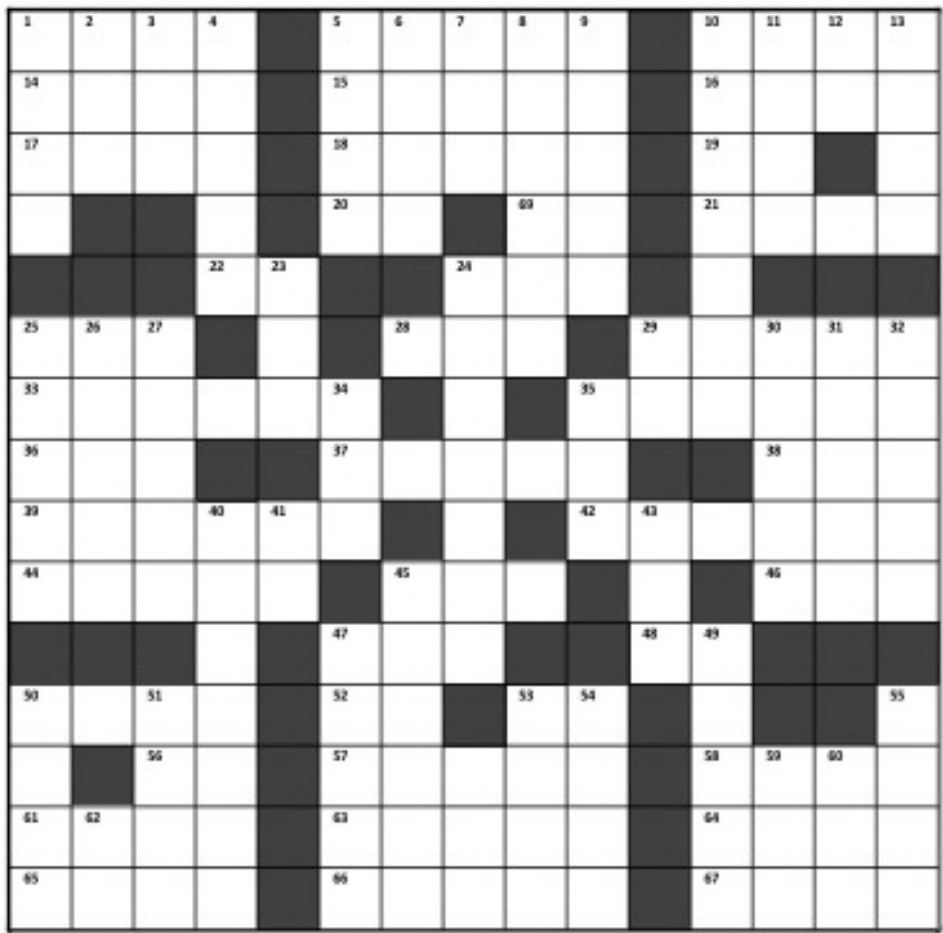
Unfortunately, there are more problems with the film, particularly in its ending. This film has an incredibly over-acted and over-dramatic ending that is just annoying to watch. The drama serves no purpose at all and almost undermines the film’s ultimate story. There are even action scenes in the film. Why did this film need those? I just feel like the movie was over-dramatized without need. Whenever a remake comes out, I have to ask if it has any purpose. This film adds a fun scene at the beginning that I liked. And the production looks very sleek and modern. But apart from that, the old-fashioned story was better the way it was in the 1974 version, which was just better written. If you like old-fashioned mysteries, this will probably appeal to you. But I would definitely recommend checking out the 1974 version first. ♦

Grade: C



CROSSWORD

ISABELLA PESTOVSKI (ME ‘19)

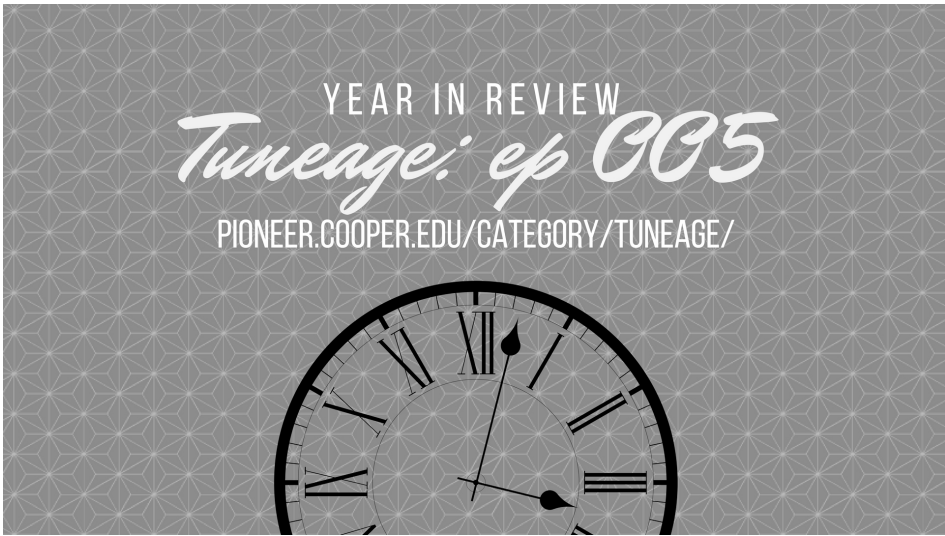


ACROSS:

- 1. Second half of the name of “Hip or Hyped” reviewed eatery in this issue
- 5. Popular Thanksgiving condiment
- 10. Traditional dress of 25 down
- 14. \_\_\_ nitrite, also known as poppers
- 15. India currency
- 16. Beware these in March
- 17. Capital of Ukraine
- 18. What wakes you up
- 19. \_\_ Connectivity, US company
- 20. The first state
- 21. Andrew Lloyd Webber’s musical on Broadway
- 22. Yes, oui, etc.
- 24. ATM number
- 25. Secure Sockets Layer
- 28. Attila the \_\_\_
- 29. Keshia: “I like your \_\_\_”
- 33. First half of 1 across
- 35. To hold back
- 36. First Legend of Zelda game with 3D graphics (abbr.)
- 37. It’s not Fourth of July, or Thanksgiving for that matter, without \_\_\_ pie
- 38. American Translators Association
- 39. A key component of Thanksgiving dinner
- 42. An emotion probably running high leading up to Thanksgiving dinner
- 44. Last name of previous crossword maker
- 45. “\_\_\_ or Hyped”
- 46. Spherical lip balm brand
- 47. Burger holder
- 48. Famous number in math
- 50. Season we are currently in
- 52. Did it on \_\_\_
- 53. British oil company
- 56. One of Jupiter’s moons
- 57. To spread
- 58. Therefore
- 61. \_\_\_ Baldwin
- 63. To overperform
- 64. Oboe’s need
- 65. To itch
- 66. Uttered as in disapproval
- 67. Perennial plant with a trunk
- 69. Major of self promoting crossword writer

DOWN:

- 1. Have your \_\_\_ and eat it too
- 2. ”Cheerleader” artist
- 3. Holiday after Christmas (abbr.)
- 4. They make gifts in Santa’s workshop
- 5. Level of education required for a Master’s
- 6. i.e. law, order, decree
- 7. Citation style used by sciences and psychology
- 8. Not uncommon to find these creatures in NYC apartments
- 9. Country bordering Saudi Arabia and Oman
- 10. Site of Thanksgiving preparations
- 11. A thought
- 12. French article meaning “the”
- 13. Chinese-American chicken dish named after a General
- 23. Substance used to color a surface to produce an image
- 24. Pie usually eaten after Thanksgiving dinner
- 25. Those who hail from Scotland
- 26. Exclaim
- 27. Unit of volume
- 29. Prefix meaning “two”
- 30. Proverb expressing general truth
- 31. What vinyl records are considered now
- 32. Low carts without sides used for heavy loads
- 34. Yay or \_\_\_
- 35. Interjection to show amusement or scorn
- 40. Small anchor
- 41. Letter between m and o
- 43. Unit for current
- 45. Spread made with tahini and chickpeas
- 47. Old word for intoxicated
- 49. Not chemically reactive
- 50. What House Bolton does to their enemies
- 51. In \_\_\_
- 53. Past tense of bid
- 54. Poke someone
- 55. You see EE students do this a lot
- 59. Paris commuter rail (abbr.)
- 60. Expression of enthusiasm, sympathy
- 62. \_ Pain Quotidien



NEXT STAFF MEETING  
TUESDAY, NOV. 28, 1 P.M.  
PIONEER OFFICE, LL217, NAB

HIP OR HYPE: CHICK’NCONE

ISABELLA PESTOVSKI (ME ‘19) | MORGAN WOLFE (ME ‘19)

This week, we visited Chick’nCone to try their take on the Southern staple chicken and waffles. The original version is fried chicken stacked on top of waffles with butter and syrup served for breakfast; Chick’nCone creates “fork-free chicken and waffles,” which are fried chicken bites served in a waffle cone with your choice of sauce. Chick’nCone serves six different types of sauces: Kickin’ Ranch, Yella BBQ, Traditional BBQ, Buffalo Blue, Cinna-Maple, and Peri Peri. You can get a large waffle cone filled with one type of sauce covered chicken bites for eight dollars, or you can get a “flight” which is a sampling of four different types of sauces on mini cones for \$12. We chose the latter so that we could sample different sauces.

We were told by the server that the fan favorite is Kickin’ Ranch, the most ordered is “Cinna-Maple”, the employee favorite is Yella BBQ (honey mustard), and the second most popular is Buffalo Blue. Naturally, we decided to get all four of these in our “flight” as we were told this was “the way to go.”

The food was presented very well as it looked really appetizing. The portion size was fair and was a decent amount of food for two people, appropriate for a midday snack. The cones were placed in a nice tray with holes for the cones to sit in, perfectly positioned for photos.

We first tasted the Kickin’ Ranch, which was not our favorite. It was a little spicy and didn’t taste much like ranch. It was better with the cone as the cone added a flavor contrast. Then we tried the Buffalo Blue. Morgan thought this was very similar to the Kickin’ Ranch because both were spicy and didn’t have a unique flavor. However, Bella thought it tasted good and definitely was better than the Kickin’ Ranch because it was similar to boneless buffalo wings and went well with the cone.

Next up was the Yella BBQ, and this one was the best one by far. If either of us would get a whole cone, we would choose the Yella BBQ because the sauce tasted great and went with the cone as well as with the chicken, together creating a supreme pal-

ette of sweet and savory. The sauce itself was a good texture and thickness to go with the chicken so it wasn’t overpowering but was still flavorful.

Finally, we tried the Cinna-Maple, which Morgan liked because she is a fan of cinnamon and syrup; however, the syrup was thin and pooled at the bottom of the cone instead of totally sticking to the chicken, leaving it a bit dry. Bella did not like the Cinna-Maple because it was too sweet and in combination with the sweet waffle cone just made the chicken seem out of place and created a too-sweet savory snack.

At the end, we did agree that the cones themselves were not impressive and didn’t taste fresh, they were thin and crispy. If the cones were a bit softer, it would have been a better eating experience because it would provide a nice

texture difference against the fried chicken. But the fork-free aspect did work, surprisingly, and it was pretty easy and enjoyable to eat without creating that much of a mess (except for the Cinna-Maple one which was pretty sticky and had liquid syrup pour out at the last bite).

Final verdict: Bella and Morgan both say HIP! ♦

*Chick’nCone*  
Gansevoort Market at 353 W. 14th St.  
Daily 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.