

On August thirtieth of this year, President Jamshed Bharucha asked the Schools of Art, Architecture, and Engineering of The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art to deliver their individual plans for reinvention toward the end of the coming fall semester. Each school was asked to include their ideas for the establishment of a sustainable financial model for their school and for their vision of unparalleled academic excellence.

We, the Faculty of Engineering, respond here to that charge in the spirit of collegiality, communication, and transparency. We believe that everyone connected to this great institution is deeply invested in its success, its mission, and the pursuit of its excellence. Additionally, we have an overwhelming desire to not just retain but also strengthen the environment of this institution, one in which creativity, discovery, and mutual appreciation are promoted.

We believe that, in order to maintain this environment, The Cooper Union community must continue to subscribe to a shared code of ethics and integrity – to the principles of Peter Cooper – and to have a shared sense of responsibility for an infrastructure which provides everything it can to those who entrust us with their education, our students.

We recognize and embrace our responsibility for delivery of the academic program and our role as guardians of the academic reputation of The Cooper Union. We freely acknowledge that discussion pertaining to undergraduate tuition does not fall within the realm of academic instruction, academic assessment, or student mentorship and we fully comprehend that we have no input to any decisions on such matters. Nevertheless, the Faculty feels obligated to affirm its “philosophical principles” to the President and to the members of the Board of Trustees: it is our belief that a fundamental tenet of this school is the universal application of merit scholarships whereby undergraduate students are admitted based “solely on merit” and that “all enrolled students” are awarded a full tuition scholarship.

This affirmation should in no way be interpreted as a refusal to acknowledge the grave financial situation of the school; however, it is the Faculty’s position that any financial contribution required from the student body should be determined by the Board with complete transparency of process and should be equally applied across all three schools.

Should it be determined that The Cooper Union can no longer sustain its tradition of full tuition scholarships for all undergraduate students, the Faculty of the School of Engineering foresees challenges, especially with respect to public perception of our institution and to student recruitment. Despite these potential challenges, we are committed to any reinvention efforts seen to be necessary and to continuing our collective effort to perpetuate and enhance the excellence of our undergraduate programs. Institutional support for maintaining the deepest possible tuition discounts together with vital faculty involvement in the admissions process may still enable The

School of Engineering to continue to attract future classes of students who can be effective partners in the creative life of the school and exemplary professionals after graduation.

Recognizing The Cooper Union's current financial crisis, this Faculty has risen to the task of reinventing itself with a set of revenue-generating programs, on the understanding that they be wholly consistent with our current intrinsic standards of excellence. The additional activities proposed here use our collective expertise to provide programs that enable individuals with niche educational requirements in the fields of engineering to obtain the necessary qualifications to advance their careers. If it is seen to be appropriate to implement and deliver these proposed programs, the Faculty will retain its freedom to propose expansion in future years with additional activities that promote instruction and research on the most pressing issues of engineering of our time.

To an outline of these suggested programs are added faculty reflections and recommendations on curricula, communications, and culture – all offered to enhance and improve the reputation and day-to-day operation of this, our beloved institution – The Cooper Union.