

THE COOPER UNION
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF SCIENCE AND ART



THE IRWIN S. CHANIN

School of Architecture

Introduction

The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture has a long and well-known tradition of asking students to engage with both abstract and technical questions that connect the built environment to a sense of civic responsibility:

How do you design effective public space? What is the role of a monument?

How does architecture relate to its site and the larger community?

How do materials perform, and can they be deployed in sustainable ways?

At the same time, students—who work together in one large studio, regardless of the year of study—are trained in the essential skills of drawing, model-making, and design development while learning analytical and critical uses of digital technologies. More and more, architecture draws upon an expanding set of disciplines—from biology to computational sciences to interactive technologies—all of which have helped architects re-envision their way of working. A Cooper architectural education



motivates students to explore these different perspectives as a basis for expanding their design vocabularies.

Through a five-year, studio-based curriculum, students investigate the role of the architect and the societal and environmental implications of their work, taking cumulative courses in design, structures, building systems, environmental technologies, history and theory, representation, construction management, and the multiple forms of contemporary practice. The goal of Cooper's architecture faculty, made up of esteemed practitioners and theorists, is to convey to students that designing and building are not just the endpoint of a set of ideas, but can often themselves prompt constructive debate and critical discourse.

Together with core and elective studies in humanities and social sciences, the architecture curriculum culminates in students' self-defined thesis projects. Humanities and social science-based minors are also available to architecture students who are in good academic standing.



A Unique Environment for Making

All first- through fourth-year and graduate architecture students are provided full-sized individual workspaces within a single 8,000-square-foot open studio, while fifth-year thesis students work in smaller, adjacent spaces. This shared design studio layout promotes the kind of creative dialogue and interaction between students, classes, and faculty that are essential to Cooper's approach to learning.

The Shops and AACE Lab

Another unique feature of Cooper is the 4th Floor Shop, where architecture students have access to equipment for a wide range of three-dimensional works at all scales. The 4th Floor Shop, staffed by professional technical assistants, supports construction and fabrication in wood, metal, plastics, plaster, and clay, and includes welding equipment and a bronze casting foundry.

The Cooper Union was recently awarded a \$2 million grant from the IDC Foundation to create a new multidisciplinary fabrication studio called the Art, Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (AACE) Lab. The AACE Lab offers facilities for students from all schools to collaborate on projects involving state-of-the-art "making" technologies, from 3D printers to robotic arms to virtual reality.



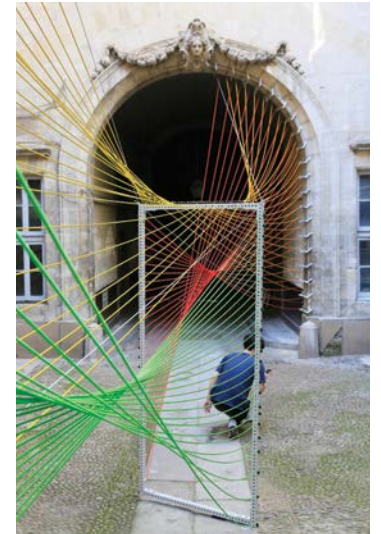


End of Year Show

Each year, The Cooper Union community hosts its End of Year Show (EOYS), a tradition that completely transforms classrooms, labs, studios, and galleries across campus, showcasing student work from all three schools—architecture, art, and engineering. The exhibition not only gives students a chance to share the culmination of their experiences from the academic year, but invites the public to see the innovative and critically engaged work for which Cooper students are known.

Structures I

As part of the Structures I course, architecture students learn how to work with the particular properties of different building materials. Two recent projects that came out of this course challenged students to design and fabricate public installations. The first project, IBEJI, was a collaboration with dieFirma, an art gallery in the Cooper Square area dedicated to providing a space for the local community to engage with thinkers and makers. The second project, Manifold/Corps et Cadre, was an installation for the 14th Festival des Architectures Vives (FAV), an annual architecture festival that takes place in Montpellier, France.





MoMA Models

A highly lauded exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) entitled *Toward a Concrete Utopia: Architecture in Yugoslavia, 1948–1980* included five highly detailed, exquisitely executed architectural models conceived and fabricated by students of The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture.

Students studied the history of Yugoslavian modernism and analyzed the buildings' structures to replicate their designs in scale while gaining experience working with a client and designing for a museum audience.

The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture Archive

The Architecture Archive records the history of the School of Architecture's pedagogy by documenting student work, providing students with resources that augment and enhance their architectural education, and producing informative exhibitions and publications on architecture and its related disciplines. The Archive is responsible for the coordination, design, curation, and installation of all major exhibitions presented by the School of Architecture in the Arthur A. Houghton Jr. Gallery, the 41 Cooper Gallery, as well as exhibitions presented in the third-floor hallway—a main thoroughfare of the school.

Work study and part-time students are essential to the Archive's daily activities. Their contributions include handling archival materials, documenting student work, and preparing materials for exhibitions and publications. Students also assist with installations in the galleries and the third-floor hallway.





Opportunities for High Schoolers

SATURDAY PROGRAM

September to April, the Saturday Program offers tuition-free studio courses in art and architecture to New York City public high school students. The program was founded in 1968 by Cooper undergraduate students, and Cooper students continue to provide instruction and peer mentorship. The course schedule provides the intensive work time necessary to explore media, technique, and concept for both beginners and students who are building their college admissions portfolios. In addition, there are museum and artist studio visits, guest artist lectures, and a year-end exhibition.

SUMMER PROGRAM

The five-week Introduction to Architecture intensive is designed to familiarize students with architectural thinking and design while developing a portfolio of projects. Students receive instruction in a variety of representational tools and media: digital drawing and model-making techniques, analysis and representation, and computer modeling and fabrication.

Applying

The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture admits students based on their talent and potential.

APPLICATION STEPS FOR THE BACHELOR OF ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM

- A completed application, the [Common Application](#) (for first-year applicants), [Cooper Application](#) (for transfer)
- One teacher recommendation (two letters for transfer applicants)
- Your official high school transcript or GED certificate (including mid-year report)
- Any official college transcripts, sent directly from the college or university
- SAT/ACT (test optional)
- \$75 application fee or fee waiver

Studio Test

The Studio Test allows us to observe how you think and create, how you follow direction and manage time, as well as your problem-solving abilities. The Studio Test will be viewable to applicants a week after the application closes. Each applicant has one month to complete and return the test.

After students have submitted the required application, they will be asked to complete a supplemental Studio Test (instructions to appear in the applicant portal once the test is released).

Graduate

We offer a Master of Science in Architecture degree, a three-semester post-professional program. Students apply using the [Cooper Application](#).

Application Deadlines

UNDERGRADUATE

Bachelor of Architecture: Early Decision: **December 1**

Regular Decision: **January 5**

GRADUATE

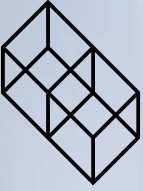
Master of Science in Architecture: **January 5**

Affording Cooper

As an all-honors college, every admitted undergraduate student receives a half-tuition scholarship currently valued at \$22,275 per academic year.* Applicants will automatically be considered for additional merit-based scholarships. To be considered for need-based financial aid, students must submit the [FAFSA](#) (002710).

Residence Hall

The Student Residence Hall offers apartment-style housing for approximately 170 students. Most apartments accommodate four students and are comprised of two bedrooms with a shared bathroom and kitchen.



The Cooper Union
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of Science and Art

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**Join our
mailing list.**

**Sign up
for an event
or tour.**

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self-guided
virtual tour.**