

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Before we open the floor for discussion of the bylaws and charter, I would like to address some of the questions that have been raised about this body, to which I shall henceforth refer as the Cooper Union Faculty-Student Forum, or, briefly, as the Forum.

The authority and legitimacy of the Forum arises from negotiated language that appears in the following documents:

1. The Agreement between The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art and the Cooper Union Federation of College Teachers (the CUFCT).
2. The Governance of the Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture.
3. The Governance of the Cooper Union School of Art.
4. The Governance of the the Albert Nerken School of Engineering.
5. The Governance of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

While the CUFCT Agreement refers to a “Forum,” and the Governances to a “Senate,” it should be kept in mind that the Forum was convened via a mechanism negotiated by The Cooper Union and the CUFCT that permitted the President of Cooper Union to call a meeting in the absence of a Chairperson.

Without this negotiated language with the CUFCT, there would have been no legal method with which to call the first meeting of the Forum. According to Article Eight of the current CUFCT Agreement, “The Governance of each Faculty, as it exists from time to time, respectively, shall remain in full force and effect pursuant to its own terms, *on the understanding, however, that each such Governance shall be applied in a manner which is consistent with the terms of this Agreement*” [emphasis mine].

President Campbell’s convening letter states, “Based on my initial discussions with the CUFCT leadership and others, I have decided to convene the Faculty-Student Senate as it is currently defined in the contract.” Despite President Campbell’s use of the term “Senate,” the phrase “as it is currently defined in the contract” refers, ipso facto, to the current terminology, which is “Forum.”

President Campbell’s letter continues, “At the first meeting, the Faculty-Student Senate will be asked to elect a chairperson from its membership and to develop a plan for reconciling the faculty governances and the CUFCT contract to create a college wide Senate, which will be known as ‘The Cooper Union Senate.’ A constitution and bylaws must also be developed. The new plan, along with consequential modifications of the governances would then need to be approved by the Board of Trustees of The Cooper Union.”

With the appropriate revisions in terminology from “Senate” to “Forum,” as detailed above, the first two parts of this charge, 1) “to develop a plan for reconciling the faculty governances and the CUFCT contract to create a college wide Senate,” and 2) “A constitution and bylaws must also be developed,” have been completed through the work

of a subcommittee. Drafts of a constitution and bylaws have been sent to you earlier this week, and the discussion of these drafts will take up the bulk of today's meeting.

It should be noted, however, that wherever the Forum decides on wording for the bylaws or charter that departs from what is currently in the CUFCT contract, such wording must be reviewed by the President of the CUFCT and by the Chief Financial Officer of The Cooper Union, who are the Signatories of the Agreement. The President of the CUFCT and the Chief Financial Officer of The Cooper Union will either amend the language of the Agreement to conform to the wording passed by the Forum, or they will recommend alternate language that would benefit all parties. This alternate language would then be debated and voted upon by the Forum.