

THE COOPER UNION
MEETING OF THE FACULTY-STUDENT SENATE

MINUTES

Tuesday, November 25, 2014
4:00-6:00pm
Room 506, 41 Cooper Square

Present:

Faculty and Library Representatives: Diana Agrest, Julie Castelluzzo (Vice Chair), Day Gleeson, Daniel Lepek (Chair), Margaret Morton, and Sohnya Sayres.

Student Representatives: Harrison Cullen (Secretary), Diego Gonzalez, Hunter Mayton, Andy Overton, and Nick Pacula.

Ex-Officio Members: Dean William Germano, Associate Dean Stamatina Gregory, Acting Dean Elizabeth O'Donnell

The meeting was called to order at 4:15pm.

MINUTES

Minutes from the meeting held on September 30, 2014 were presented for reading and discussion.

Members proposed that the minutes be amended to better reflect the content of the conversation regarding Campus Security, including the noted differentiation between the categories of "Campus Safety" and "Campus Security."

A motion was made and seconded to accept the amended minutes of September 30, 2014.

Motion passed. (10 in favor, 0 opposed)

CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair highlighted the Senate's goal of improving communications between the Senate, Board of Trustees (BoT), and Cooper Union Community. Members were reminded to reach out to the Executive Board or fellow members with questions or concerns. Also emphasized was the Senate's jurisdiction, given that it is an advisory body to both the President and BoT. Members acknowledged that the Senate is advisory to the BoT directly and not by means of the President.

The upcoming meeting between the Senate's Executive Committee and members of the BoT was discussed, as it will be the first since Spring 2013. The Chair stressed the need to establish a successful link between the Senate and BoT. The possibility of discussing the mission statement with the BoT was raised.

Members expressed concerns regarding the visibility of Senate statements for the President and BoT. It was noted that minutes were currently posted to the Cooper Union website and sent directly to both Chief of Staff/Secretary to the BoT Lawrence Cacciatore and President Jamshed Bharucha. However, members urged that we not only seek that our statements be read by Trustees, but that Trustees actively reply to these statements.

It was agreed that this topic would be revisited after the completion of other agenda items.

UPCOMING OPEN MEETING ON TITLE IX

Members were reminded to attend the Title IX Open Forum on Tuesday, December 2nd. The Executive Committee met with Cooper Union's Title IX Officers and the Dan of Students to help organize the presentation, which will be given in part by Title IX specialist Marjory Fisher. The agenda for the presentation was outlined to members. Also acknowledged was the fact that this open forum is not considered a training session, but rather a presentation meant to increase awareness of Title IX issues.

PRIORITIES AND FUTURE PLANNING

In order to better understand the Senate's plans for the Spring 2015 semester, members discussed possible goals of the body.

Members agreed that the mission statement of The Cooper Union must be discussed. It was unsure whether or not the BoT was currently seeking to revise the mission. It was noted that Chairman Lincer has previously stated plans for a community-inclusive revision process, but no apparent action has been taken as of yet. It is possible that the Board has refrained from further revision of the mission due to preoccupation with the lawsuit with the Committee to Save Cooper Union. Members emphasized the necessary input from faculty and students when concerning the mission of The Cooper Union.

Members discussed the possible upcoming renewal of President Jamshed Bharucha's contract with the Cooper Union. Members agreed that, given our direct advisory nature to the Board of Trustees, our input on this specific issue is appropriate and important.

The Cooper Union's lack of faculty awards and recognition was noted by members. Previously, administrators has expressed that the existence of faculty awards would directly conflict with union agreements. However, members questioned this due to the existence of faculty awards at many other universities. Some members brought up other titles and awards given to faculty members, but these existed infrequently, with nonspecific criteria. Overall, members agreed that the we want to come together to recognize faculty.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING WITH TRUSTEES

Members raised concerns regarding the administration's overstepping of bounds concerning recent academic and curricular developments.

Specifically noted were the roles of Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and Dean of Engineering. The equivalency of the titles "Provost" and "Chief Academic Officer" as stated in the By-Laws of the BoT was recognized. Members discussed whether the hiring of Cooper Union's CAO adhered to Equal Employment Opportunity laws. Members agreed that it is important to understand how the BoT defines the role of a CAO, and that this would be raised at the upcoming meeting between the Executive Committee and BoT.

Members mentioned that the Academic Leadership Team (ALT) has only met once since the start of this academic year, and that the CAO is the presiding officer of these meetings. Members also mentioned that meetings of the Planning and Assessment Council (PAC) have also been suspended by the CAO. The Executive Committee will be prepared to present information regarding these concerns to the Board.

Members expressed the concern that The Cooper Union's robust tradition of shared governance has "collapsed" and that it is becoming increasingly harder to reconcile with current administrative practices. The current suspension of approving the updated Engineering School Governance was noted. It was also noted that President George Campbell never employed a Chief Academic Officer during his time at Cooper, and that the responsibilities of the position were shared amongst members of the administration and faculty.

The Executive Committee hopes to take many of these items and initiate ongoing discussions with the Board of Trustees.

Given the advisory nature of the Faculty-Student Senate in relation to the Board of Trustees, members highlighted the need for direct consultation of the Senate by the Board when voting on matters that are of interest to the Senate.

Motion: A motion was made to adopt the following resolution:

"The Faculty-Student Senate request that the Board of Trustees not vote on any issues under the purview of the Senate, including, but not limited to: the mission, use of resources, academic issues, and academic planning and development, without a prior consultation of the Senate membership and a resolution on behalf of the Senate."

Motion passed. (10 in favor, 0 opposed)

Members discussed issues with the proportion of full time and adjunct faculty. The academic standard noted by members was a faculty consisting of approximately

60% full time members. In comparison, only 20% of classes from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences' were taught by full time professors this semester. Members expressed the responsibility of the CAO regarding this matter. It was proposed that the Executive Committee present our own goal for full time/adjunct proportion to the Board of Trustees, and subsequently ask them for their own standards. It was noted that it is important to reference university standards through separate categorizations (national, schools similar to Cooper Union, schools in NYC, etc.).

OLD BUSINESS

Members noted that Vice President William Mea has reached out to campus constituencies in order to form a Campus Security Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought to the floor.

Meeting adjourned at 5:50pm