

THE COOPER UNION
MEETING OF THE FACULTY-STUDENT SENATE

DRAFT minutes
3rd Regular meeting, November 28th, 2017

PRESENT:

Denis Adams, Sanjeev Menon, Jaramiah Pratt, Bryce.....Parker Limon, Dilan Dewald, Jake Jackmauh, Laura Sparks, Stan Mintchev, Sam Keene, Julie Castelluzzo, Sonya Sayres, Maren Stange, James Lowder, Natalie Brooks and Mauricio

Meeting Commenced at 12:07pm

Reading of minutes: Minutes accepted.

The meeting started with a note that the admin committee only wanted to send 1 representative to the senate meetings so that the two representatives (Denis Adams and Margaret Morton) would be alternating attendance. It was brought up that there is a reason for 2 members as it is in the by laws.

We started by discussing Sanctuary School Status, though Mauricio was not present so it was a brief question about where we stand. It was said that the diversity task force focused on making welcome environment to everyone and that it is hard to declare sanctuary because of the loose definition. It was suggested to discuss this with the diversity task force as something they can potentially address.

HR practices were tabled to wait for Natalie to arrive.

The Great Hall Usage:

President Spark s addressed questions of the philosophy behind the programs offered and about the idea of Freedom of speech. the fact that thinking around the great hall programming is evolving: they are thinking about more active programming to excite and engage with current relevance while maintaining the Great Hall as a source of revenue.

There needs to be clarity for the community about who to invite. The balance that must be invoked is impact speakers can have vs the importance of inviting different points of view. The thinking is that the Great hall should be a place where different views can be addressed and represented while maintaining a legacy of fact based conversation, not hate based. When people are invited from the fringes of certain debates it is likely to provoke controversy, and gets in the way of productive debates.

There has been confusion as to when something is a Cooper Union event or not. People do not always distinguish between the host and the event which can be an ideological issue.

A radio broadcast from the Great Hall was brought up: to add a live-streaming element and a concern that the generosity not be lost in the larger community, we need some guidelines to maintain a generous presence without playing favorites.

Natalie Brooks From HR:

She started the discussion by mentioning the federal policies effects on our hiring policies and how we can extend help to people we are interviewing, such as extending legal advice etc. the immediate issue is that everyone from HR is new so policies will have to be built once everyone knows their way around.

Latest: NYC just passed a law that says you can no longer ask an applicant about current compensation. This was created for gender incongruities. This was brought up as a way to protect applicants. When things happen through a chain of command, information such as new laws have to pass through that chain quickly so that we can work with applicants to make sure they are being protected to the best of our capabilities and to the most recent order of law.

HR might be more able to enact policies in the spring semester when new people are caught up in the system.

The discussion turned to how to create broader pools for recruitment, and how to change so the model for the pool itself opens up. There was discussion about adjunct and part-time hires, how diversity in this realm is a place that can have a huge effect on the overall diversity of the school

Natalie says she has been having one-on-one with the deans, building the part-time pools that are diverse but can respond to immediate needs.

The point was addressed that it is the process that needs to change. Getting out of habits that are easy, or changing those habits so they are more up to date.

There is an erosion that can happen otherwise in policy and in those habits. The strength of new hires goes down. The faculty are setting standards and need to defer to the excellency of the candidate instead of the process.

Because of erosion, the faculty is losing opportunities to direct the intellectual excellency of the school, and it feels as though some of the enthusiasm for hiring adjuncts is lost for the sake of convenience.

There was a suggestion about referring to the opinion of the students about adjunct

faculty hires. Perhaps having a system where students offer names when people come to lecture etc. so that we have an idea of opinion and so we might use the students as a resource.

Mauricio on Sanctuary:

Mauricio joined us to talk about the idea of sanctuary for universities. He talked about how the idea of Sanctuary is essential to the Cooper Union. The school has tried to be a model of looking beyond western points of view holding this as an ideal. We owe it to the culture at Cooper to deal with sanctuary in terms of protocol and in keeping people safe. The constant stress of unsafety makes people physically sick, we need to be a school that cares for its students.

we also should be carrying a banner, leading a charge, as we have a huge history of doing.

Defining sanctuary: In order for sanctuary to work effectively, it has to be defined by each space.

creating a safe space for people to speak their story

within administration: there needs to be protocols. (example being, not sharing information) it requires continuous assessment, internal to how people are speaking to each other.

which voices are being heard within the processes of governance and forms of sanctuary?

Diversity: perspectives need to be given space and safety. Sanctuary for certain perspectives can emerge

we also need to know the limitations of our school and where we are already failing. In our case it is the financial language and a financial mindset used to address issues of sanctuary. Framing things in such a way that finances take precedent over safety for our students. A lot of things that make a safe space don't need money.

He suggested things like slowing agendas down, slowing leading voices down so there is a diverse space for new ideas. Our curriculum could use updates.

Effective definitions of what Cooper Union could be.

undocumented communities gain agency through extra-legal measures, and we can help them by knowing how to get around/ help collaboratively and creatively. Know how to navigate the gaps.

Creating language beyond illegalization and from the very beginning of recruitment to the students, getting word out there that we strive to be a safe space for them. It is important to be putting the message out there that undocumented students are welcome. It is a failure of imagination on our part and the best way to learn sanctuary is to accompany, to be a witness.

Cooper as a space needs to expose itself to these narratives.

shout out to New Sanctuary Coalition who helps people every Tuesday fill out their papers. Is it possible to get them in to Cooper for a training?
This is not charity, not a humanitarian effort, it is a self-understanding of what so many in the country are going through.

We then talked about the need to get away from evidence based models. We talked about data, and how data is important, but only if we have the proper apparatus to look back at data, so that we are not in the mindset of data.

We closed by mention that the websites should have all the groups and members on it, and an agreement that agendas should be sent out to campus wide emails which was not happening.

meeting adjourned at 1:55pm