As you find yourselves preparing for Orientation with great excitement, I would like to warmly welcome you to the Albert Nerken School of Engineering at Cooper Union, one of the country’s most challenging academic institutions of higher learning. You will be immersed in a vibrant learning environment and surrounded by creative thinkers like yourself. Our intent is to instill in you an ethos of enlightened contributions to society, where your fellow classmates, faculty, and staff alike will engage in life-long learning and ethical practice. I look forward to building a relationship between you and Cooper Union that will continue to grow for many years after you have graduated.

As you navigate your first year at Cooper Union, I have compiled a list of key school policies that are particularly timely for you, which can be found in the 2015-2016 Course Catalog. Please read these policies before classes begin, as you will be responsible for abiding by the rules and regulations found there.

Best of luck in your transition to college life and I look forward to meeting you in person.

Academic Honesty: Professors at Cooper Union are committed to preserving an environment that challenges every student to realize his or her potential. You are expected to provide your best effort and will be supported to produce original work of the highest caliber. Firm guidelines defining violations of academic integrity are listed in the Course Catalog under ‘Academic Standards’ and ‘Academic Integrity’. If the definitions of cheating are unclear to you, it is your responsibility to review your professor’s policies to ensure compliance.

Placement Exams: The Mathematics Department will administer an optional placement examination for MA 111 (Calculus I) on Wednesday, August 26th, 8am – 11am in the Rose Auditorium, 41 CS. Pre-requisite: a 4 or 5 on the BC Calculus AP Exam, or 7+ on the International Higher Level Baccalaureate Exam, or at least a B in a college-level calculus course for at least 4 credits. You will be notified of exam results, and registered into MA 113 (Calculus II) if you pass the placement exam, before the first meeting of either MA 111 or MA 113.

General Chemistry (Ch110): Students who have received a score of either 4 or 5 on the AP Chemistry exam will be granted credit for this course, with no associated grade. You should contact the Associate Registrar, David Chenkin, immediately (chenki@cooper.edu) to check that we have received your AP scores.

The Physics Department offers placement exams for Ph112 (Physics I: Mechanics) in January and Ph213 (Physics II: Waves and Electromagnetism) in September. These exams are held during the second week of the semester in which the corresponding course is offered during Tuesday club hours (noon - 2 pm); the location will be announced during the first week of class. Note that you
are required to attend the first week of these courses before you take the placement exam in week two. **Pre-requisite:** You may only take the placement exam if you have received a score of '5' on the AP/C exam or (for new transfer students) if you have received a grade of "B" or better in a calculus-based physics course for at least four credits. You may only take each placement exam once. If you pass it, you may drop the course and receive credit, but you will not receive a grade for the course. You may also choose to continue taking the course for a grade.

**Academic Advisement:** Professor Chris Lent (lent@cooper.edu) is the official first-year advisor. In conjunction with your respective department chairperson, he will guide you regarding issues with scheduling, course sections, or any aspect of your academic pursuits. Prof. Lent can be found in the Computer Center, on the 8th floor of 41 CS. Any unresolved matters will be dealt with by the Office of the Dean in consultation with Professor Lent.

**Registration:** You were automatically registered for your first semester and we plan on registering you for your required second semester courses as well sometime in November. You can access your educational plan (ie the list of courses you will be taking throughout your career at Cooper Union) through the [Student Self Service](#) portal. This plan requires Professor Lent’s online approval before it can be accepted by the [Registrar’s Office](#) during your first year. You are assigned a departmental advisor for your remaining three years.

*Registration Changes* are currently handled through an “Add/Drop” process that involves Professor Lent and the Dean of Engineering. The Office of Admissions and Records will process these changes. If a course is dropped between the second and eighth week, the letter “W” will appear next to the course on your transcript for that course. Please extend the courtesy of promptly informing the instructor by email that you are dropping his or her course. (See ‘Drop/Add Period’ below.) After the eighth week of the semester, students cannot withdraw from a course unless a documented medical or other such extenuating circumstance exists.

**Changes of Major:** Because first year coursework is common to all disciplines, you will not be allowed to change majors until after spring semester grades are known. To change your major, you need at least a 3.0 G.P.A., and approval from the Chair of the department you wish to enter. Each department has its own specific transfer policies. A “change of major” form is available in the Deans’ Office and you should also schedule a meeting with me to discuss your options.

**Departmental Advisor:** After the first year, your department chairperson (see table) will assign a full-time faculty member to be your advisor. Only a full-time faculty member may act as your advisor. During your sophomore, junior and senior years, you will complete your registration materials with the guidance and signature of your assigned faculty member before they are accepted by the [Registrar’s Office](#). It is your responsibility to contact your advisor and set up an appointment in a timely fashion before you register. This meeting must be conducted in person.

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<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Advisor</th>
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<tr>
<td>CHEMICAL ENGINEERING</td>
<td>Prof. Richard Stock</td>
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<td>CIVIL ENGINEERING</td>
<td>Prof. Jameel Ahmad</td>
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<td>ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING</td>
<td>Prof. Fred Fontaine</td>
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<td>MECHANICAL ENGINEERING</td>
<td>Prof. Stan Wei</td>
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**Academic Standards:** Academic probation is the consequence of unsatisfactory scholarship which may involve a compulsory reduction of academic load, interviews with an assigned adviser, and additional academic counseling. The Academic Standards Committee prescribes the conditions that the student must meet before being removed from probation. A student whose semester grade point average is 2.0 or lower is on automatic probation and may be a candidate for dismissal by the Committee. Two semesters of automatic probation may cause the student to be a candidate for dismissal by the Committee as well. Please refer to the section entitled ‘Academic Probation, Withdrawal, and Dismissal’ in the Course Catalog for more details.

You are responsible for seeking out the help you need in succeeding at Cooper Union. Reach out to your faculty advisors and department chairs proactively. For all of you, the rigorous curricula at Cooper Union are unlike what you have experienced in high school. Faculty and administrators are here to help you, but we need you to take the first step. Take ownership of this experience and take it seriously, as it will set you up for the remainder of your career in college.

**Disability Accommodations:** Students seeking accommodations due to a condition covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act are required to formally self-identify through the Office of Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will work with the students to clarify requested accommodations and also notify the student’s faculty of the requested accommodations. It is the student’s responsibility to speak directly with each of their faculty members to see how their accommodations can be met in each unique classroom and/or laboratory setting. The Dean of Students, Chris Chamberlin, can be reached via e-mail at chamber@cooper.edu and his office is located on the 3rd floor of student residence hall.

**Medical Absences:** Attendance policies are set for each course by individual faculty members. Students who have medical excuses for missing class should contact the Dean of Students promptly. Students will be required to provide the Dean of Students with documentation from a medical provider justifying the absence. The Dean of Students will inform faculty when an absence is due to a valid medical issue/condition so that the absence can be considered excused. It is important to note that even with excused medical absences; a student is still responsible for completing all of the course requirements. For many courses, attendance is a vital component of the classroom learning experience. If, in the opinion of their faculty, a student’s absences have resulted in their missing vital components of in-class discussions and experiences, students may be required to withdraw from a course and retake it even with valid medical excuses. In addition to communicating with the Dean of Students, students must remain in regular communication with their faculty when they need to miss a class. The Dean of Students, Chris Chamberlin, can be reached via e-mail at chamber@cooper.edu and his office is located on the 3rd floor of student residence hall.

**Class Schedules/Timings:** Classes start on the hour and end ten minutes before the end of that hour. For classes of more than 50 minutes in duration, suitable breaks will be given. If a faculty member consistently fails to follow this timing, please contact the Dean of Engineering. Current course schedules can be found at the following link: [http://cooper.edu/engineering/schedule](http://cooper.edu/engineering/schedule). This link also contains a list of textbooks, which can be found at NYU Bookstore.
Club hours: Use of club hours for academic purposes is strictly forbidden: this includes makeup classes, examinations (except for placement exams), etc. If a professor schedules a class or other class activity during club hours, please report it to the Dean of Engineering.

Credits for Internships/Research: The Cooper Union School of Engineering does not grant credit for programs of study or research or internships other than those specifically pre-approved by the appropriate department in the School of Engineering and the Deans’ Office. In addition, it is never possible for students to receive both academic credit and a salary/stipend (if one is offered) for such an academic program.

Courses taken at other institutions: If you wish to take a course elsewhere and also want the credit transferred to Cooper Union, the course must be pre-approved by the Chair of the appropriate Cooper Union department. As a general matter, many courses simply may not be taken elsewhere (e.g., Physics I). In order to get a course pre-approved, bring as much course documentation as you can to the Chair of the appropriate department to have the course assessed. These materials must include at least the syllabus and textbook. The course must be judged to be equivalent to one taught at Cooper. Note that only grades “B” or better can be transferred (not B-) and the grade will not be factored into your G.P.A.

Drop/Add Period: After the first week of every semester, “Add’s” are not allowed, including independent studies. During the first week, you may “Drop” classes with approval from your faculty advisor with no record of that “Drop” on your transcript. For classes being dropped between the second and eighth weeks, a “W” will be placed next to the course on your student transcript. In extenuating circumstances, and with the signatures of the course faculty member, your academic advisor, and the Dean of the School of Engineering, “Drop’s” will be allowed after the eighth week. This condition requires an additional waiver form, found in the Deans’ Office, to be signed by those listed above. Otherwise, withdrawals are not allowed and you will receive an “F” in that course. Not being able to manage your time in satisfying your end-of-semester deadlines is not an excuse. You should be factoring this work load into your course selections during registration.

“Five-Year Plan”: Our undergraduate programs were designed to be completed in four years; extensions are uncommon and are only granted in exceptional circumstances. In some cases, students may be required to complete courses elsewhere at their own expense, but only with pre-approval of the departmental chairperson in which the course is offered at Cooper Union.

“Full-Time Student” Status: You must take at least 12 credits per semester to be considered a full-time student. Failure to maintain 12 credits has important consequences for your mandatory health insurance coverage and for student loans. Medical insurance for international students taking less than 12 credits a semester may be affected as well, however, their F-1 status will not.

Humanities and Social Sciences: Cooper Union is comprised of four faculties—Art, Architecture, Engineering and Humanities. Adding, dropping, or section changes of humanities courses require the approval of the humanities faculty. The HSS Dean’s office is on the 3rd floor of 41 Cooper Square.
**Illness:** We cannot accommodate you in terms of allowances, make-up examinations, etc., unless we have documented evidence from the treating medical professional concerning an illness. You must notify the Dean of Students (cahmber@cooper.edu) so that your professors can be informed of your condition. Debilitating physical or psychological issues should be reported to the Dean of Students also, so that you can be advised about finding suitable help.

**Leaves of Absence:** Discretionary or medical leaves of absence from Cooper Union can be granted with a written request to the Dean of Engineering. In the case of illness, supporting documentation from the qualified treating medical personnel must accompany the request. Similarly, an application for readmission must be accompanied by certification of fitness to return to school in such medical cases. (See also “Resignation.”)

**Lockers/Mailboxes/Email:** Students can secure personal lockers *provided to each engineering student on the 5th, 6th, and 7th floors of 41 Cooper Square* by placing a lock on an unused locker and registering it through Student Services at the following website: [https://esc.cooper.edu/admin/lockreg](https://esc.cooper.edu/admin/lockreg). You will be able to keep your locker until you complete your degree. You will also register for a personal email address with an @cooper.edu extension. It is essential that you check your physical mailbox (color-coded by major on the 5th floor) and email regularly as these are both important ways in which we will communicate with you. In the case of email, if you do not use the Cooper Union webmail portal, ensure that you forward messages to the address you use. Cooper Union academic and administrative addresses should not be used for personal mail or packages.

Personal mail sent to 30 Cooper Square, 41 Cooper Square, or the Foundation Building may be discarded without notification; never use these building addresses as your personal/permanent address.

**Policies:** All school policies are detailed at: [http://cooper.edu/students/policies](http://cooper.edu/students/policies). They include codes of conduct, alcohol, drugs, smoking, copyrights, sexual assault, non-discrimination, and anti-harassment.

**Resignation:** A student may “resign” at any time in writing; a resignation is permanent and is accompanied by a separation notice that is placed in the student’s file.

**Safety, Security, and Campus Emergencies:** Cooper Union is committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment for our students, staff, and faculty. All first-year and transfer students in the School of Engineering are required to take a shop safety course and pass a written exam. All laboratory personnel and professors will review safety procedures posted in their labs before you start working with them.

If you witness any safety violations, you are strongly urged to report them to the supervising staff member and/or professor. Anonymous reporting can be performed through: [https://safety.cooper.edu/](https://safety.cooper.edu/). Important campus-wide safety and emergency guidelines are handed out to every student, but can also be found at: [http://cooper.edu/students/safety](http://cooper.edu/students/safety). Remember, you are an integral part of keeping our campus safe and secure. Every active student will be provided with a photo identification card that must be swiped to gain entry into 41 Cooper Square, the Foundation Building, and the Residence Hall. Visitors can be signed in through the Dean’s Office;
host students must accompany their guests at all times. Visitor’s passes are issued in the Dean’s Office.

**Course Substitutions (“Twelve Credit Rule”):** In consultation with the student, a department may substitute up to twelve (12) credits of required courses with other coursework at Cooper Union. The intent of the faculty is to permit flexibility in the curricula and to allow for the possibility of tailoring a program to a student’s particular goals. A waiver request must be first approved by the corresponding department Chair and then countersigned by The Office of the Dean of Engineering. Note that engineering departments have varying policies regarding courses taken outside Cooper Union. Substitutions are not allowed for core courses.

**Will Cooper Union Pay for courses at other institutions?:** We presently have an agreement with Eugene Lang College that allows Cooper Union students to take courses there at no cost to them. However, they can only be taken at no charge with the written pre-approval of Dean Germano.

Again, welcome to Cooper Union and I look forward to meeting you in person shortly. Best of luck!