

The Irwin S. Chanin
School of Architecture

The Cooper Union
for the Advancement
of Science and Art

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20 May 2024

Laura Sparks
President
The Cooper Union for The Advancement of Science and Art
Room 701
The Cooper Union Foundation Building
7 East 7th Street
New York, NY 10003

Demetrius Eudell
Vice President for Academic Affairs
The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art
Room 205
41 Cooper Square
New York, NY 10003

RE: Memo of 10 May 2024, *Important End of Year Show Update*

Dear Laura and Demetrius:

Attached Please find a response from the Faculty of The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture to the Memo of 10 May 2024, *Important End of Year Show Update*.

Thank you in advance for your timely attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth O'Donnell

Secretary to the Faculty



Faculty of the Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture Response to the Memo of 10 May 2024, *Important End of Year Show Update*

May 17, 2024

Dear President Sparks and Vice-President of Academic Affairs Eudell,

The Faculty of The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture acknowledges the legal and security concerns raised by recent events. Nonetheless, the Faculty expresses its strong disapproval of the plans and protocols for the End of the Year Show made by the Administration and communicated by the Academic Deans by e-mail on 10 May 2024.

- Excluding the public from the End of the Year Show is contrary to The Cooper Union's mission to support and protect the free exchange of knowledge among members of the School community and between the School and the public. We hold the free exchange of knowledge to be critical to teaching and learning at the School.
- The End of Year Show connects the students' academic work from within the school to the outer world while the public opening draws scores of alumni back to The Cooper Union at the end of every academic year. Barring the public from the exhibition is detrimental to fostering connections with alumni and the broader architectural community.
- The protocols unnecessarily pit legal and security concerns against the creative and intellectual interests of students and faculty, who value the opportunity to freely share their work with the profession, other schools of architecture in the city, and to alumni of The Cooper Union.
- The protocols, similar to the installation of security cameras in our teaching spaces, demonstrate distrust towards the students, faculty, and staff of the School. They are destructive to our powerful sense of community.
- These protocols impose restraints on our own students' right to organize, assemble, dissent, and speak freely within the School. This damages their trust in the institution, fractures our community, generates ill will against The Cooper Union, and ignores the important role that student protest has played in the history of our country, and must continue to play today – from voting rights to civil rights to anti-war movements
- These extreme and restrictive regulations were created without considering the principles of transparency and open dialogue, which are essential to the functioning of any educational institution and are core values that bind our community. The measures for the End-of-Year Show contradict the School's academic interests and were implemented without consultation or consent from the School's governing bodies and primary stakeholders. This goes against the spirit of our Governance and runs contrary to the goals and practices of a democratic society.

Given these concerns, we expect open and constructive dialogue between the Schools and the Administration henceforth.

Sincerely,

The Faculty of
The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture
of The Cooper Union for The Advancement of Science and Art

THE IRWIN S. CHANIN SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE OF THE COOPER UNION
FACULTY MEETING, 17 MAY 2024

A special meeting of the Faculty of The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture was held on 17 May 2024 by Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/3471788803>.

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

A. Dean(s)

1. Hayley Eber, Acting Dean, Chair

(Members Absent: Associate Dean, Position Vacant)

B. Resident Faculty

Full-Time Faculty

2. Professor Diana Agrest
3. Professor Nader Tehrani
4. Associate Professor Michael Young

(Members Absent: Assistant Professor Nora Akawi, Associate Professor Lydia Kallipoliti, Assistant Professor Lorena del Rio [Medical Leave])

C. Proportional-Time Faculty

5. Assistant Professor Benjamin Aranda
6. Assistant Professor Elisa Iturbe
7. Assistant Professor Mersiha Veledar

(Members Absent: Assistant Professor James Lowder)

D. Adjunct Faculty Representatives

8. Professor Adjunct Samuel Anderson
9. Associate Professor Adjunct Lauren Kogod
10. Distinguished Professor Adjunct Elizabeth O'Donnell, Secretary

E. Student Representatives

11. Benjamin Haslam, 2nd year
12. Angelis Heredia, 3rd year, (Alt.)
13. Julian Yang, 4th year (Alt.)

Quorum Required: 8

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ex Officio

Distinguished Professor Adjunct Guido Zuliani

Guests: Steven Hillyer, Director and Chris Dierks, Collections Manager and Grants Liason, School of Architecture Archive; Sue F. Gussow, Professor Emerita; Assistant Professors Adjunct Ryan Brook Thomas, Julian Palacio

The Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 12:05 PM

1. The Chair recognizes Elisa Iturbe to present the latest draft of "Response to the Memo of 10 May 2024, Important End of year Show Update" from the Administration.

Professor Iturbe notes that a revised draft of the Response was prepared with Elizabeth O'Donnell as requested by the faculty at its meeting of 16 May 2024. The current draft was circulated to all faculty teaching at the school this semester earlier today.

The draft was also presented on the Zoom screen so that faculty could follow proposed edits.

Each paragraph was discussed, including the opening and closing paragraphs.

Professor Anderson makes a motion:

Motion: For the Faculty to approve the Response as amended at this meeting, and to send the Response to President Laura Sparks and Vice President for Academic Affairs Demetrius Eudell.

Second: Lauren Kogod

Yea: Agrest, Tehrani, Young, Aranda, Iturbe, Veledar, Anderson, Kogod, O'Donnell, Haslam, Heredia, Yang

Nay: 0

Abstain: Acting Dean Eber

The motion passes. Response to be delivered ASAP by hand and by e-mail; Faculty request that the Response be copied to them when it has been delivered.

Motion to adjourn: Hayley Eber. Second: Nader Tehrani.

Yea: Unanimous

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0