

# THE COOPER UNION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE AND ART

## FACTS 2009–2010



Founded by inventor, industrialist and philanthropist Peter Cooper in 1859, The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art offers an unparalleled education in art, architecture and engineering, providing every admitted student with a full-tuition scholarship.

Believing that an “education of the first rank” should be “as free as air and water,” Peter Cooper, who himself had less than a year of formal schooling, established The Cooper Union to offer a free education to working-class men and women without regard to gender, race, religion or economic status.

A century and a half later, The Cooper Union is ranked among the finest American colleges. It remains a private institution with a public mission: To prepare gifted students to make enlightened contributions to the cultural and scientific life of our great urban centers.

### ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

**The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture** offers a five-year program leading to the **Bachelor of Architecture** degree and preparing students for a rich array of opportunities in the profession, as well as a new post-professional **Master of Architecture II** degree. Through close interaction with a faculty of internationally recognized practitioners and scholars, students graduate with the lasting ability to produce an architecture that is a meaningful synthesis of the social, the aesthetic and the technological.

**The School of Art**, offering a four-year program leading to the **Bachelor of Fine Arts** degree, is firmly committed to an integrated curriculum that encompasses all the fundamental disciplines and resources of the visual arts — painting, sculpture, drawing, film and video, graphic design, photography and printmaking. The students in the program benefit from a faculty drawn from New York City’s extraordinary pool of practicing professionals in the fine arts and graphic design.

**The Albert Nerken School of Engineering** offers both **Bachelor and Master of Engineering** degrees in chemical, civil, electrical and mechanical engineering, as well as an **interdisciplinary engineering degree**. The goal is to prepare students for leadership and entrepreneurial roles in a world that faces complex challenges politically, socially and environmentally. At the graduate level, the Nerken School encourages interdisciplinary studies in a number of areas, such as computer systems, robotics, biomedical engineering, environmental issues and materials.

**The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences** provides the academic thread that binds the three schools into a tightly integrated whole. All students in the first two years take a **core curriculum of required courses in the humanities and social sciences**. Students in the School of Art take an additional three-semester sequence in art history. During the third and fourth years, students have considerable latitude to explore the humanities and social sciences through elective courses. The dynamic Center for Writing works with all students throughout their time at The Cooper Union.

**The C.V. Starr Research Foundation at The Cooper Union** is the umbrella under which operate several interdisciplinary research centers, where students work with faculty to seek technological solutions to real-life problems.

- The Maurice Kanbar Center for Biomedical Engineering
- The Center for Materials Design and Manufacturing Technology
- The Center for Signal Processing, Communication and Computer Engineering
- The Center for Sustainable Design
- The Center for Urban Infrastructure and Systems

## STUDENT, ALUMNI AND FACULTY ACHIEVEMENT

With approximately 1,000 students, The Cooper Union wins a vastly disproportionate share of the nation's most prestigious awards:

- 31 Fulbright scholars since 2001
- 11 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships since 2004
- At least one first prize—and often more than one—in student competitions sponsored by professional societies every year for the past seven years
- 40 percent of graduates go to top-tier graduate programs

Among the prestigious awards recently won by our alumni:

- 12 Rome Prizes
- 21 Guggenheim Fellowships
- Three MacArthur Fellowships: Whitfield Lovell (A'83), Elizabeth Diller (AR'79), Ricardo M. Scofidio (AR'55)
- One Nobel Prize in Physics: Russell A. Hulse (Ph'70)
- Nine Chrysler Design Awards
- Three Thomas Jefferson Awards for Public Architecture
- One inaugural Jane Jacobs Medal: Barry Benepe (A'54)

## RANKINGS

The rigor of The Cooper Union's academic programs has made it one of the top-ranked institutions of higher education in the nation in all categories.

- Ranked **Best Baccalaureate College (North)** in "Best Regional Baccalaureate Colleges" by *U.S. News and World Report*
- Ranked **third in the nation among Undergraduate Engineering Colleges** by *U.S. News and World Report*. Ranked first in undergraduate engineering colleges in chemical engineering.
- Ranked **third in research culture among architecture schools worldwide** in a survey by the Key Centre for Architectural Sociology.
- Listed among the **Best Design Schools for Creative Talent** by *Business Week*.
- Listed among the **Nation's 25 Hottest Universities** by the *Newsweek-Kaplan College Guide*.
- Listed among the **Most Selective Colleges** by *The New York Times*.
- Listed in "The Best American Colleges" and "The Best Value Colleges" by *The Princeton Review* as "...one of the best overall bargains—based on cost and financial aid—among the most academically outstanding colleges in the nation."

## ENROLLMENT

Students are accepted on the basis of merit alone, and every student receives a full-tuition scholarship currently valued at \$35,000 annually.

For the academic year 2008-2009:

- 9 percent admission rate
- Approximately 1,000 full-time undergraduate students: 50 percent in engineering; 35 percent in art; 15 percent in architecture
- 50 students in the Maurice Kanbar Graduate Institute working toward the Master of Engineering degree
- 64 percent male, 36 percent female
- 40 percent African-American, Asian-American, Latino, American Indian; 45 percent Caucasian; 13 percent foreign nationals
- 60 percent from New York City and State; 40 percent from 40 other states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands
- 7.5 to 1 student-faculty ratio

## 41 COOPER SQUARE

The Cooper Union has just completed construction of a technologically advanced academic building at 41 Cooper Square that will house the Albert Nerken School of Engineering and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and additional facilities for the School of Art and the Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture.

Designed by 2005 Pritzker Prize-winning architect Thom Mayne of Morphosis, the nine-story, 175,000-square-foot, full-block building replaces more than 40 percent of the college's academic space with reconfigurable, state-of-the-art classrooms, laboratories, studios and public areas. 41 Cooper Square will be the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified academic laboratory building in New York City, aspiring to Platinum standards.

Ground was broken for 41 Cooper Square on May 9, 2007. The building was dedicated on February 12, 2009, upon the occasion of Peter Cooper's 218th birthday and the launch of the 150th anniversary of the founding of The Cooper Union. The building will be in full use by students and faculty at the beginning of the fall semester, with the official ribbon-cutting taking place on September 15, 2009.

## THE GREAT HALL

On March 27, 2008, Barack Obama, then a Senator from Illinois and a candidate for the Democratic Party's nomination for president, delivered his first economic policy speech at The Cooper Union, taking his place in a tradition that began during the campaign of 1860 with an address by Abraham Lincoln. Since then the Great Hall has served as a forum for addresses by Ulysses S. Grant, Grover Cleveland, William Taft, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson and Bill Clinton. The address came as part of a typically energy-filled year at the Great Hall, which serves, as Peter Cooper intended it, as a forum for public discourse and civic participation. Great Hall forums during the past year comprised 220 public programs, with some 40,000 attendees; speakers included the President of Bolivia, Evo Morales, Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathi, economist Paul Collier, historian Garry Wills, poet and activist Daniel Berrigan, legal scholars Randall Kennedy, Alan Dershowitz, and former Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin.

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