Initial Report  
*2016-2017 Alumni Survey - Cooper Union - Combined Results*  
**January 24th 2017, 6:51 am MST**

**value - From the perspective you have gained since graduation, what do you especially value about your undergraduate experience at this institution?**

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| From the perspective you have gained since graduation, what do you especial... |
| highly dedicated faculty; intelligent and driven classmates; hands-on, project-based curriculum. |
| I value the feedback I had been given about my work, but other than that, most of my time at Cooper seemed to be stuck within this 'protest' where students and faculty seemed to be more concerned about occupying local parks than investing in the education and community of the school. Once the whole free cooper debate came up then they switched their attention to that. At that point feedback and critiques became political debates instead of what the intentions of the course were. |
| That there was a lot expected of the students. Especially after the point where most of my classes were within my major and there was a rapport between the students and the faculty, the balance between pushing us to learn and work head while being reasonable was well established. I think the small, talented, student body and the feeling that "everyone is in this together" went a long way towards creating this environment. |
| The academic rigor, engaged faculty, and extraordinarily bright student body all positively contributed to my undergraduate experience |
| I learned how to learn. It's prepared me to be independent and seek knowledge in any new and unknown field in my future. |
| Critical thinking |
| What I appreciate most are the critical thinking skills I acquired at this institution, which are applicable in every facet of my life. |
| Emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving. |
| Interaction with faculty, focus on education rather than research goals for faculty |
| I value the ability to have a head start in life because I don't have crippling student loans. |
| That the full tuition scholarship left me debt-free which allowed me much greater choice in what path to follow after Cooper. |
| Educational rigor\\Independent study\\Like-minded fellow students |
| critical thinking and surrounding yourself with intelligent peers |
| Full tuition scholarship, analytical skills, problem solving skills, New York City experience |
| Having to work at such an intense level makes everything after seem relatively easy. Any time there is a tough situation at work, I can draw on the skills I learned managing seemingly impossible situations at Cooper. |
| Working with talented students with a genuine interest in subject matter. Freedom to pursue independent study. Rigorous education (no grade inflation). Small class size. Availability of faculty. Location. |
| The ability to think everything through, weighing all options and figuring out a solution, even if it's unique. |
| I valued the friendships that I gained. It was a tough curriculum with very little opportunity for "fun". Being there with a group of like minded people got me through the 4 years of hardship. |
| Critical and analytical thinking skills |
| I had always wanted to be part of a creative community and that's what Cooper Union was for me. |
| Small class sizes; diversity of subject matter; opportunity for inter-school coursework |
| Critical thinking \\Questioning the status quo |
| I'm not sure how to adequately describe everything valuable about my experiences at Cooper Union. People, places, concepts, strategies, books and essays I read and still have, techniques, professional practices, work ethic, knowledge from Art History and Humanities classes, all of these have impacted my personal growth in complex ways. |
| Talent of faculty and students, rigor, free tuition |
| I value the combination of rigorous academics with exposure to a range of diverse people and experiences, inside and outside the classroom. |
| critical thinking and communicating. Creative thinking. |
| Sense of community. The preceding questions about having discussions with people of different values is irrelevant, as the vast majority of the faculty and student body are like-minded liberals. |
| The breadth of exposure, the freedom to explore new subjects (fantastic humanities courses and classes at the New School), the opportunity to take incredible art classes with full time art students as a full time engineering student, the experience of living in NYC and having the entire city full of music, arts, parks, international communities, etc. as an extended campus. |
| I learned teamwork very well |
| I learn problem solving skill which helped me to become who I am today. |
| Critical thinking; resistance to approved ideas or dogma |
| My perspective has actually shown me all the things that I could have pursued that would have resulted in valuable education, but because they were not made apparent to me or I did not know to pursue them, I did not gain. The workshops and facilities were excellent, however. |
| Appreciation of thoroughness, fun and engaging faculty with challenging material, project-based classes, environnemental and bioengineering research, performing arts groups (dance opportunities), bonds formed as students and club members, |
| My fellow classmates in my major year were amazing, but that was it. |
| Ability to think critically and apply deductive reasoning to problems |
| Opportunity of experience. Value of free education |
| There was a great deal of political turmoil during my time which encompassed the beginning of tuition and the changing of the bathrooms. This brought out a lot of communication between everyone in the school, and made the Cooper culture grow, and I think this awareness of the student bodies political field helped me grow as a person. |
| Having gained early a real since of purpose and importance for my field and a strong since of social responsibility. |
| I learned how to read critically. (And think critically.) |
| The bond between students - we helped each other and made each other stronger. |
| \* Incredible professors\\\* Being surrounded by and working with an incredible student body\\\* Small class sizes that allowed for much one on one attention |
| Community of passionate and engaged colleagues |
| Freedom to work in any media - no major. Strong Foundation teachers. Excellent, dedicated peers who continue to inspire me! |
| critical thinking, understanding that the greatest education does not need to cost money. |
| Dedication of the faculty and greatly well rounded eduction. |
| Cooper forces you to grapple with the core of a problem and to have the drive to address that problem clearly and forcefully. The undergraduate education at Cooper - in the School of Architecture, at least - teaches you to be reflexively critical of your own ideas, actions and creations. Those are strengths which are necessary to produce meaningful creative work.\\\\While the education at the School of Architecture is not overly focused on developing marketable professional skills - and it should not be - it does prepare students well if they intend to enter professional practice and pursue a career in architecture. |
| I value the proper liberal education, not solely focusing on employability. Instead, focusing on flexible skills in critically understanding the world around you. |
| The challenging academic environment, diverse student body and quality of leadership of my peers. |
| Students learning leadership values by running clubs and organizations. |
| What I learned about design, design thinking, and how to design have been invaluable to my life and my career. I also especially value the critical thinking I learned at CU. |
| hard core |
| The amount of exposure to different areas of study covered within my major has been extremely usueful in my work career. |
| Merit based education / free tuition created a learning environment where students could rely on one another to provide valuable points of inquiry and interaction. |
| During my time of attendance, Cooper Union was FREE. That is the most important aspect of the university. Free education is a class issue. Cooper Union destroyed this situation, mismanaged by the board of trustees and corrupt steering comittees and Jamshed Bharucha and gross bloated administration that is COMPLETELY UNNECESSARY TO EDUCATION and designing 2 billion dollar star-chitecht buildings demolishing the perfectly serviceable 19th century Hewitt Building. \I'm proud that I went there and that my education was part of an progressive mission, instituted by a philanthropic rich guy, to keep education "as Free as Water And Air"...especially considering the ongoing development of the East Village and Astor Place as a playground for the wealthy, and education in Manhattan and New York City in general as the privelege of the international elite. |
| free tuition |
| Hardworking ethics, community service, and interdisciplinary skills. |
| Tuition free, conceptually driven, diverse. Now as a teacher I realize how rare Cooper was and important for artists. |
| I value the privilege to have been able to study and learn alongside the best undergraduate engineering students in the country. Through this, I was forced to study and work harder in order to keep up with the status quo. It was this diligence that I developed that ultimately propelled me through law school and to the career I have now. In sum, I especially value the studious, intelligent, and committed student body that I was fortunate to be a part of. |
| The rigor and the constant exploration of connections between art, science and architecure. \\Also, I took a year off during 4th year, which really allowed me to come back with a different perspective. |
| Engineering and critical thinking skills, multicultural exposure, interdiscipline exposure |
| the fellow students and conversations led my faculty. All technicians at this school prepared me most for post-grad work situations, especially wood shop folks. |
| Independent thinking and problem solving; technical aptitude in engineering. Individual accessibility of professors - I did another undergraduate degree at a larger school; accessibility of professors at Cooper is much better, |
| Difficult and sometimes harrowing and tough studio sessions and critiques prepared me to be able to face any situations of the real world. |
| My undergraduate experience was defined to a great extent by the fact that all students received a full tuition scholarship, based on merit, to attend the Cooper Union. It meant that all who were there shared an intense interest in being there, and thereby a closeness with each other and the institution. I felt that there was a spirit of engagement and autonomy among the professors and students. The students were not 'customers', nor was the school, in my opinion, trying to define their purpose by comparison to other institutions or trends. However, the faculty members were all obviously passionate about their own field and came from unique cultural contexts. This has taught me to value the significance of personal biography as well as striving towards autonomous positions, as a person and as an artist. |
| Critical thinking and engagement, a robust worldview, and a dedication to improving the world. |
| The strength of the faculty and the intelligence/ talent of the students |
| It allowed total focus on my own practice and integrity to my practice |
| That I have no college debt, and that I learned how to see past failure and to "own" my own actions. |
| Accurate insight to profession, a spirit of learning,competitiveness |
| Critical Thinking |
| I'm glad the Engineering school focused on the humanities as well. It has helped me tremendously career wise. |
| Incredible school. One-of-a-kind experience that I couldn't have found anywhere else. Wish I could go back knowing what I know now and being more mature and appreciative of that opportunity. |
| Very little. |
| the diversity, the common work ethic, the sense of community, the will to be different from other institutions |
| An understanding of the value of self-reliance and the ability to be self-reliant. The students and faculty in architecture consistently reinforced the idea that I could never count any anyone or anything and basically did not care about your general well-being. |
| Exposure to a diverse range of top-notch facilities and different creative techniques. Confidence in making art, experimenting and taking risks. (rather than just critical theory) Making vs Criticism was very well balanced at Cooper. Appreciation of life-long continued learning, understanding that no person or artist is the finished article. |
| It was free. They challenged us. They pushed us to push ourselves. |
| Rigorous problem solving ability, both theoretical and practical. |
| Cooper Union was free at the time of my attendance, which gave the institution's core values (equal access for all, innovation, social progressivism, the power of collaboration) credibility. Those are values I have held onto for dear life.\\Beyond that, my teachers were excellent and caring, my classmates were diverse and talented, and I always felt that all resources were available to me as a student (be it financial aid, advice from faculty, library and cultural access throughout the city). |
| Faculty, fellow students, project teams |
| The connections, friends and familiar feel to everyone at the cooper union. Cooper Union is quality over quantitiy. |
| the opportunity to improve upon the educational and civic program that had been and is currently being offered |
| Strong alumni network, problem-solving skills developed |
| It was an academically rigorous environment, highly demanding of students, in exchange for a free education. That it was a full tuition scholarship for all enrolled students had very much to do with the high academic, intellectual, and creative rigor of the student body. |
| Core engineering education, hard work, perseverance, effective technical communication (writing, speaking, presenting), teamwork, group learning, problem solving |
| The freedom of expression, the permissive use of facilities and resources, the friendliness of the staff and faculty, the openness of my peers, the challenging atmosphere, and the intense civic/political engagement demanded by the Tuition Crisis. |
| Being able to learn and succeed in a challenging environment |
| The focus on group work and all aspects of managing a project |
| At Cooper, I was constantly pushed by professors, classmates, and my first experiences living in NYC. I grew tremendously during my undergraduate education. I feel grateful to have been surrounded by so many differing perspectives, and this really helped me to grow quickly and imagine my world in new ways. |
| I have made a few life-long friends with whom I share the bond and pride of attending and graduationg from Cooper. It was not easy. So, friendship. |
| I value the collective effect of a student body comprised of students that were very committed to their work, part of that commitment I believe was due to their socioeconomic standing; a free Cooper Union attracted students that needed the scholarship. I feel less of a connection and passion for Cooper, now that it charges tuition. |
| That it was rigorous; the faculty was passionate and helped pass that passion and rigour onto us as students, even if they held positions very different from one another (especially so in fact); that it was free was a source of pride and bonding within the student body; it was principled in a country where most education feels like a carefully inoffensive product to be purchased; it truly felt like the learning came first, and was protected. It was tough and equally tough on all, but very rewarding, and the fact that all students and faculty were giving it their all was tangible in the results. |
| I met great people both on the faculty and in the student body. |
| Learning how to learn. Small knit culture. Being around smart and hard-working people who didn't take anything for granted. |
| The camaraderie created by a tuition free environment. (it was when i attended). that was the single most bonding thing and the only place i have experienced it was cooper union. |
| It showed me consistently how to apply myself to new problems and have confidence that I can solve them. |
| There is nothing stronger than the bond of the Cooper family. I learned more from the relationships I created while I was there. |
| Personal interaction with faculty |
| Cooper was a unique experience. It was a wonderful melting pot of so many different types of people and thinkers. It was a remarkable environment that was stimulating and interesting. It was a rare environment. While not perfect in so many ways, the experience was tough but great. |
| No student debt. |
| The habit of challenging assumptions, the appreciation of rigor and labor, and the value of critical thinking. |
| The education at Cooper Union particularly in the architecture school is one of a kind. Though it is unfortunate the economic situation it is and was in while I attended. When something like this is brought to the student body it takes away from the work. |
| Coming from a small rural town in Upstate NY, my Cooper Union experience gave me a whole new perspective on life, people, and cultures within a major city, while still providing a unique feeling of a small community within that metropolis. I have very close friends from Cooper who I still keep in touch with and who continue to provide me with artistic support and inspiration. I am also in contact with professors who shaped my development as an artist, which means so much to me. It was a most memorable and romantic time of my life and it has greatly influenced my successes as an artist. |
| I value exposure to concepts, mediums, and ideas I wouldn't have come across otherwise. There are a few faculty members that were very influential and supportive, but mostly I value the time spent with my peers. I felt like most learning happened through shared experiences and the exchange of ideas. |
| No debt, and a rigorous introduction to many fundamental concepts in engineering. |
| Exposure to advanced mathematics (calculus, linear algebra). Exposure to ideas, in philosophy and in politics, which I failed to understand during my time in college but revisited several years later and understood. |
| unique environment resulting from full scholarship, diverse & brilliant student body, dedicated professors |
| Teacher dedication |
| 1. Working with a strong diverse faculty. 2. Critical thinking at every level of the curriculum. 3. Space to develop ideas within very focused course topics. 4. Institutions commitment to drawing, from live model to abstraction to technical representation. 5. Studying in NYC. |
| THe intensity of the education and scope of information covered in the course work. There is no doubt that I received a more thorough and broader scoped education in my professional courses than others who attended other engineering schools. |
| Forcing us to think for ourselves and be resourceful. Access to accomplished artists and professionals. |
| The principle and values of the school. The school should maintain its policy and continue to attract the quality of students I had when I was there. |
| Opportunity to work on co-curricular activities.\\Low cost. |
| Tuition-free |
| I've come to value the level of expectation and approach inwhich many faculty members applied when working with students. The importance of a serious academic and research based pedagogy along side my studio practice was invaluable and became necessary as I navigated employment after graduation. I also came to vaule the free education awarded me while encouraged to dialogue and debate with my professorsÛÓan experience almost non of my colleagues recived at their paid universities. |
| My peers, the passion and rigor everyone has for their work and what they personally believe in. |
| I valued the other students and what I learned from the diverse thoughts and ideas we shared. |
| The curriculum was very demanding (in terms of both the content and the volume of work), and I think that learning to balance these demands for four years has made most other educational and professional pursuits that have come afterward (law school, job) seem a bit easier than they might have otherwise. |
| Cooper Union taught to me critical thinking and gave me confidence to succeed in whatever field I wanted to pursue. |
| The tuition was free when I went which helped me to graduate with a low student debt. The professors were extremely knowledgeable and it is an institution of higher learning. |
| Yes |
| Professors were trying to teach life lessons and information literacy. I'm now very good at vetting sources and synthesizing information. |
| Knowledge about how I learn and what it takes to keep it. |
| Conceptual rigor |
| I benefited in a way that students don't any more because Cooper was still free when I went there. This was by far the most important aspect of the education we received at the time. We were treated like adults and future colleagues by faculty and staff, never had faculty shelter us or shy away from controversial topics, and we knew that if we were there it was because we belonged and deserved respect. We all knew that the playing field was level among students in at least that one regard which created an amazing atmosphere. \\\\I also greatly value the interdisciplinary nature of the education we received and the emphasis on critical thinking, critique, and valuing multiple perspectives. I benefit from this every day. It has taken me a decade working in colleges and libraries to realize how rare an emphasis on these skills is in higher education. |
| The wonderful faculty and the opportunity to collaborate with students outside of my degree. |
| Exploring and honing conceptual thinking and the ability to create and convey ideas. |
| Access to professors, generally engaging faculty, small classes, creative environment. |
| Solid technical foundation, learning how to break up a large problem into smaller parts, rigor, we were forced to be strong to survive |
| I valued the seminars that taught soft skills necessary (but oft neglected) for career advancement. |
| I really appreciated not being made to choose a major and being able to navigate different courses across the art school. I give a lot of credit in my career as an interdisciplinary designer and critical thinker to the approach instilled at Cooper Union. \\After having attended graduate studies abroad, I have also really come to appreciate the rich resources and support that were available to me as a student at CU. |
| My communication with some of the professors (Dore Ashton, Don Kunz, Gian Berto Vanni, Hans Haacke) have played an important role not only in shaping me as an artist, but also as a person. |
| Rigor in thinking through problems |
| Critical thinking |
| I'm currently a student at MIT and find that the undergraduate education I received at Cooper was incredibly unique when compared to other undergraduate (and some graduate) programs throughout the United States and abroad. Full-tuition scholarships created a unique learning environment (created by students and faculty) and separate me from my colleagues in a positive, creative and influential way. |
| The uniqueness of the school and the scholarship provided |
| I appreciate that creative problem-solving was given privileged status in the curriculum. |
| The investment in each student and the preparation for real life |
| The focus on developing a critical approach to problem solving. Building an overall philosophy rather than a very specific and specialized set of skills or knowledge. Also the faculty and student body and how they reinforced creative thinking and dedication to one's craft. |
| I value how my ideas were challenged and supported as well as the friendships that I gained. |
| Unparalleled mission and education. |
| My problem-solving skills, engineering experience, the exposure to NYC politics through my social sciences class, the exposure to cinema through my arts class, and the time to spend living in NYC |
| That it was a meritocracy- the quality of your work and what you produced were valued higher than social status, personal wealth, where you were born- To be a student at cooper, was to be the equal of every student, and it fostered a comfort with taking risks and challenging ideas that would be impossible if money/cost had played a part. In my life experience since cooper (12 years) have seen ideas and open thought consistently be thwarted due to social ranking, wealth, and social reciprocity- Class and access to resource often consume the interactions, and the value of the human and what they produce, their work ethic is secondary. Cooper taught me to see beyond it in all situations, and to see that all that matters is change, and that the volatility of change should be embraced at every turn. |
| I was fairly independent before attending Cooper as a transfer arts student. I excelled in the areas where I had the most independence, the paid internship allowed me to involve myself directly in the fields of my interest. I had no money at that time. Day Gleeson was instrumental in seeing me through and I to this day appreciate her encouragement, trust and patients. Walid Raad and Doug ashford's intradisciplinary seminar changed the way I think and communicate to this day. Peter Buckley was hilarious and passionate, personal essay with professor (swan?) was again life changing. So many amazing visiting faculty enriched my experience, and the writing center / computer lab are resources I miss. I wish in hind sight I had been less afraid to make mistakes. |
| Concept driven art making & thinking. Free tuition! |
| I value my rigorous architecture education. The culture at Cooper fosters social and civic engagement. |
| The lack of student debt. The ability to handle coursework easily. |
| If you can make it through Cooper, you can make it through anything. Diversity, honesty, challenges, support, career opportunities |
| Students were expected to handle their own affairs (treated like adults). |
| The closeness of the community as a whole. You really get to know everyone which is great. That kind of thing doesn't happen at other schools. |
| The quality of intellectual engagement I had with my fellow students, the camaraderie of the students and the lasting friendships I gained across the 3 schools (not just engineers, but also art and architecture students). The ability of the students I befriended to make the intellectual connections between the three disciplines on our own because (at the time I attended) the school curriculum and structure did not support any integration or cross-disciplinary approach. |
| Art is the practice of learning by doing - Cooper Union first initiated me to this understanding. Art also involves reading (of both texts and life), research, and linking ideas that are not always connected a priori. Cooper helped me to become a better student, thinker, and person - without being melodramatic, I can honestly say that Cooper Union laid the groundwork for everything I believe in and hope for. And because of that, it is difficult to point to something specific. |
| I value that I was among peers who I could learn from, in addition to the professors. I also value that CU was challenging because the expectations were high for quality and quantity of work. It gave me a reference point for future endeavors. |
| I value the rigor of courses, the freedom of projects, and the friendship that I have developed with my classmates as well as some of the staff such as Professor Robert Dell. |
| Emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving |
| Smallness-- chance to work closely with a number of different faculty members, and to build a strong community with peers. |
| The opportunities it has presented me. The name Cooper Union carries weight, which has helped me obtain a great job opportunity. |
| The Cooper Union experience is so particular. It changed immensely while I was enrolled, and I am just so grateful to have been there at this time. Nothing compares to being with the art family in the middle of the East Village, |
| I learned that presentation is 85% of anything. There was a lab that we had messed up, but we still made the presentation the best we can and got a good grade as a result. Real Life / Work is the same, if something is not presented well (even if all the info is there) it will not get looked at. That was the one lesson that carried through all these years after. |
| Faculty relationships |
| I valued the faculty. However, the class polarization embedded within the culture of the student body I generally found stifling for myself and am aware of fellow alumni who left the institution with deep emotional wounds related to their inability to assimilate into the norms and habits of many of Cooper's more affluent students. |
| fix tuition |
| I value my talented classmates and professors from whom I have learned a great deal on how to think and understand the world and how to set and achieve goals. |
| Teachers |
| Excellence in the fellow student body. Professors working currently in the arts. Open structure in classes. Situational based learning |
| Faculty and the respect and trust this institution has for its students. No bureaucratic obstacles in the face of academic gains |
| I loved how tight-knit of a community Cooper Union was. I really feel like I got to know everyone around me very well. I enjoyed my interactions with professors and was happy I got to know many of them outside of class |
| Learning how to think critically |
| Excellent background in basic mathematical and engineering skills, as well as cooperation with intelligent peers to solve complex technical problems. |
| The interdisciplinary connection and discourse |
| I value the problem solving skills that I gained from an engineering degree, the ability to speak up when I disagreed with faculty and the relationships I formed with fellow students. |
| prestige |
| The experience of being in Manhattan, and living independently at that time in my life. |
| The engineering program at CU was very rigorous which prepared me well for my graduate school experiences. The program was a very "bread and butter" program that focused on fundamentals. This is highly valuable with most peer programs watering their programs down. |
| Critical thinking and doing |
| Perhaps only the ability to speak critically and defend ideas. |
| I value this period of time in my educational career to have had uninhibited learning, and opportunities for group / peer critique. It hs helped me imagine many solutions to a single issue and helps me to remain intellectually flexible |
| The freedom to experiment in with radical ideas. |
| Friends, classmates, and connections made |
| The unending challenges |
| I value the institution's uniqueness, and the creativity and critical thinking it provoked in students. I think the critical visual thinking I did as an art student helped me tremendously in my future career in the humanities and in general in being a more observant and visually literate individual. I just wish that everyone else who gets into cooper union in the future can have this experience--or even better--WITHOUT having to PAY TUITION. |
| I value the rigorous academic training. I feel that the curriculum at Cooper prepared me to be technically competent in my career. |
| The education in my field was unparalleled. The school was nimble, with a laser focus on the faculty/student relationship. |
| Cooper instilled in me a very strong sense of civic duty which I had not appreciated enough as a student. I will often engage colleagues and friends who do not understand what access to education can provide for one's freedom of learning. I also have been compelled to join organizations to work on non-profit projects (e.g., EWB) because of the classes I took at Cooper. |
| The concept of going to an amazing institution completely free. Everyone who knows cooper union is automatically impressed. Additionally, the ability work extremely hard and solve problems has been invaluable |
| Critical and autonomous thinking\Knowledge of history |
| I believe I gained analystical skills which I use in my career although I am in a very different field. I also met my spouse at Cooper which is probably the biggest influence on my life today. |
| generalist approached studies with the ability to focus on individual interest. encouraged freedom of exploration of ideas and thoughts. |
| Interaction with the other majors - art and architecture - and a close knit community. Free tuition allowed for true intellectual curiosity after graduating and the ability to let the right role or opportunity come along. I would have been under a lot more pressure to conform and accept the wrong roles under other circumstances. |
| Cool |
| Cooper is like a Montessori school, in that it basically allows you to do whatever you want, with guidance. I think we need to focus on making the guidance come from brilliant and relevant people, and give those people the freedom to design their courses. Thats it. This survey makes me nervous. |
| Relative small classes, and engineering design 101 with Mr. Schwartz |
| All the hands on projects for multiple classes is extremely valuable. Not only does it give great material for interviews, all the skills you need for group projects translate very well to working. Teamwork, scheduling and timing, leadership, and other skills are all very important. Also, Cooper life is way harder than work life. |
| There were two key experiences/relationships with faculty that I have carried with me from Cooper Union all the way to my current role as a R&D Engineer in a Medical Device company: the mechanical engineering lab course with Dr. Hollenberg and my interships at St Vincents Hospital with Dr. Haher.\\\\Dr. Hollenberg's course gave me the basic foundation for experiment design as well as effective presentation of ideas. I still tell the younger scientists and engineers, "First you need good data. Then you need to be able to present the data and conclusions effectively. If you can't convey the message, then you mind as well leave the data at the lab bench."\\\\Dr. Haher was an adjunct professor from St. Vincents Hospital who taught the Biomechanics course. After this course, I continued working with Dr. Haher in his lab at St Vincents for several semesters and summers. These internships provided real-world experience collaborating with medical students as well surgeons to complete projects in the medical field.\\\\Although I feel that attending Cooper Union gave me a solid technical foundation, I know that a good technical foundation alone is not enough to excel. There are many additional lessons to be learned related to communication, teamwork and leadership. |
| Being able to think outside of the box. |
| Close contact with professors |
| I valued learning how to learn and the general Cooper community. |
| Small class sizes; enthusiasm of the student body to learn; dedicated teaching faculty |
| Rigorous study in an amazing setting (NYC), "trauma bonding" with fellow classmates. Lifelong friendships. |
| The rigorous instruction of engineering fundamentals had me well prepared for both my graduate studies and my work in industry. |
| I found facing and overcoming the challenges placed on us was probably the most impactful part of my education. By facing things I did not think I could do and eventually learning that I could do them probably did more to change my way of thinking and approaching new circumstances than anything else. I find that the ability to face difficult things and tackle them head on sets me apart from many other people in my field. I'm frequently surprised by the difference it makes. |
| My professors intentionally did not coddle us, and that was very helpful in preparing for the real world. |
| feeling of family, experiencing an educational utopia, that money was not a part of my education or college experience. |
| Diversity of student body thanks to full scholarships, quality of instruction |
| How the school constantly strives for both depth and breadth in one's education. |
| Free tuition gave everyone a strong sense of responsibility as thinkers and makers. That I learned the humanist and Marxist critique of the neo-liberal world not just through words but the school's philosophy, the faculty and peers made the most valuable experience for me. |
| Work ethic and problem solving skills |
| The financial support that enabled me to be fully focused on my education and didn't leave me with unmanageable debt. The rigor of the faculty, wealth of resources, interdisciplinarity of the art school. |
| Small community, strong relationships |
| The ability to overcome difficult situations presented by the difficult students and faculty I encountered at Cooper. |
| Full tuition was more important than I realized at the time. The focus on empirical problem-solving (engineering school) was generally helpful across disciplines. |
| Hard-working, self-motivated classmates, that were genuinely interested in learning and growing. |
| ...that my education was free, and that it was free for all of my classmates. When the school is paying for the education, there is less student-entitlement and more respect among students! We all had the same "footing"... ...which had a nice neutralizing effect! |
| I particularly value the kind of person that the Cooper experience made me. \\\\I admit that for a few years after graduating, I did not think fondly on my experience while at Cooper because of how "burned out" I was from the significant amount of work. But over time, I learned that the very, very challenging experience made me into a stronger person, both professionally and personally.\\\\Also, see my response to previous question about learning. |
| Level and commitment of the other students, atmosphere of sincere desire to learn and create. |
| The close relationships I was able to foster with my classmates. |
| Teaching me how to think critically. |
| The challenge and high expectations led to a format for folks to truly succeed |
| The diversity and the level of interest and curiosity that the students share and the dialogue such population brings. |
| I value the diversity of students and how much talent they bring to the table. |
| Good people. Founder's good will. |
| We had to study very hard to survive, helping the establishment of my work ethics. Good approach to faculty members. Also, obviously free tuition. |
| Free ! Because that's how you get kids to show up. And then: skills in critical thinking which kids always lack, and some never learn |
| Community, an ethical and engaged critical discourse, friendship, self-understanding, confidence |
| Being around people who are passionate about being there and passionate about learning and development is crucial. |
| I especially value the ability to think critically about conceptual issues in the discipline of architecture. I wish that the school had prepared me with a better set of tools for working in the professional landscape. I think that the institution as its pedagogy stands now focuses on keeping out some of the practical issues that I face now. I think that better practical internships opportunities could be a good way to improve the education. I would have liked a better way to get advice from professors. I did not feel that I had a mentor for the entire 5-year experience. \\\\I had some extremely gifted professors. I wouldn't change the classes I took. I would simply hope to add to or expand on the pedagogical view of the school. |
| Respect and reputation of the institution within the school and externally. |
| The radical notion of a free education forces students to think about education as a societal gain, not a personal gain. I value that I went to a school where all students were on even footing with their free education and there wasn't a divide between scholarship students and paying students. I valued Cooper's location at the intersection of so many different sides of New York. I valued the idea of all of the Cooper disciplines belonging to a single field of design. |
| I value the soft skills I learnt: how to write, speak, and lead. I feel lucky that I had professors of engineering who valued these skills enough to incorporate them into lessons. |
| The intimacy of studio environment. The wood shop & computer facilities. Professors. The energy and dedication from other students also inspired my own work. |
| I value the fact that I was able to experience college without the worry of tuition. |
| I'm a much better logical thinker and am much better at solving problems than I was before my education. |
| diversity of students, teamwork, strong work ethic |
| how i have remained great friends with many of my peers |
| The ability to pursue a spectacular higher education for free, allowing me to live and grow without crippling student debt which would have followed me for the rest of my life like every single one of my friends who attended other art schools. |
| Independence and survival. The teachers and school have already identified the creme de la creme and will disregard or be condescending toward other students. Create a path for yourself and figure out how to get there on your own. The school will not help you with that. Finding a professor you can talk to may be possible, but that has not been my experience. Finding mentors continues to be hard as I have been contacted by an undergrad because there was no one he could talk to about following a chosen career path. Career services is unhelpful. |
| Professors who care a lot about teaching and undergraduate students (as opposed to graduate students). Truly challenging environment. Smart and challenging peers. |
| They taught me how to learn |
| Critical thinking |
| Graduating Debt free, excellent quality of faculty, unique structure and student body. |
| Once you learn how to think critically and logically, you can never unlearn it, and you will find yourself applying to many facets of your life. |
| The freedom to forge your own path but also feel supported. The size of the classes. The faculty. The sense of community. |
| Nothing |
| Well, not having student loans is a big big plus. But, if you are looking for something more warm and fuzzy, I do appreciate having gone to a small school with a small community and feeling a lot of pride about that community. |
| the mix of students from diverse backgrounds, with different skill sets, but all with a strong curiosity and ambition to innovate in their own way |
| small school, tight community, high emphasis on learning and collaboration, undergrads not lost in the shuffle |
| the value of a free education |
| The focus on challenging, technical work. My strong analytical background has made my professional life much easier than it could have been. I think the focus on both a breadth and depth of technical skills has set me apart from other job candidates, and, in some cases, coworkers. |
| It's rigour, and the exceptional student body, and proximity to faculty whose methods and thought processes are highly individualized |
| full tuition scholarship, collaborative environment, smart peers |
| The reputation Cooper has among engineers in the tri-state area, study abroad, Joe Viola's very practical Fundamentals of Civil Engineering class. |
| free tuition |
| As I mentioned in the section on continued learning, what I took away from Cooper was an ability to learn in a self-directed way and a tireless desire to ask questions and go deeper. I wish we had learned more about how to do research, because that was something I came to much later in my graduate work... understanding how that is another tool to drive your work and push yourself in new ways. I know that that can mean different things for different people, but I think pushing undergrads in art to understand that research isn't something you do just to write a paper you don't want to write ...it's power. It's an ability to step outside of yourself and into someone else's head who may have asked similar questions ...to learn from their explorations. Or for the folks who want to do any work around community -- maybe they should introduced to participatory action research... to have tools for learning more deeply about the community and their needs and in what they as artist might have a role or respond. So, to summarize I think that Cooper sparked and fostered a great deal of intellectual curiosity as well as taught me how to work with an amazing wide range of media which I am grateful for to this day, but I did have a feeling of not having the words to articulate my process a lot of time. I had to work on writing and research skills a lot after graduation and think it would have been beneficial to have more of that in undergrad. I also felt like there wasn't enough talk about different pathways for doing creative work. It often felt like you could go into pursuing a gallery career, some sort of art/design production and that was it. Having more support for students to think about various career pathways would be helpful. I had zero clue when I graduated about what it meant to find work that made sense for me and that I could be deeply invested in. |
| The ability to learn problems I've never seen or encountered before and making friends and cooperating with an incredibility diverse student body |
| the students and faculty at The Cooper Union were some of the brightest and most rigorous individuals that I've had the chance to interact with. |
| The BFA program did not require a declared major and allowed for a flexible curriculum. Being in NYC for my college years was a major positive. |
| Academic rigor of the classes. |
| The quality of the education |
| I value my perseverance. Cooper (some particular professors) loved to push you down and tell you that you weren't good enough or smart enough, you didn't work hard enough, and that you would never get it right. Despite that, I graduated. Albeit, unhappily, in need of therapy, and with a piss poor GPA. \\\\I will say that I was way more prepared than my peers in grad school, and graduated top of my class, but was passed over for many research opportunities because of my poor GPA. |
| I'm not sure if the dream still exists. |
| Because it was a free institution when I attended, it fostered a level of work quality and competitive spirit that allowed the best students to thrive. Those that were not performing to the highest standards that the Architecture school demanded did not contribute to the work coming from the school. Since it was free, they would be simply asked to leave, because they were not "income" for the school. It was unlike any other institution in America, and am proud to have contributed to the spirit and work of the Cooper Union. Please find a way to reverse this again, so that the institution may foster that kind of greatness again. |
| It taught me critical thinking, critique, and multi-perspective analysis, which is vital to my career. |
| The rigor of the technical education and the results- (i.e., grades-) oriented outcome prepared me for the actual engineering work environment. |
| Human connections. |
| The level of excellence and strong community |
| The school did a great job giving me the fundamentals that are needed to be a strong engineer. These are skills that as someone who hires and mentors new engineers seem to be less common (e.g., physics, mechanics, chemistry) |
| The people. The challenges. The resources. |
| The 100% tuition scholarship without a doubt elevates the quality of education to the highest possible. |
| Challenge & rigorous understanding of fundamentals |
| That it took place in an entirely merit-based environment where everyone present was there because of their own talent and hard work. Having now taught (and studied) at diverse institutions of higher learning where this is not the case , I can unequivocally say that this made all the difference. I received the best education possible because of Peter Cooper's promise to provide education as free as air and water solely on merit. My graduating class was extremely diverse, showing that a blind admissions process does lead to equality. |
| Nothing else in my life has been as hard as my time at Cooper. |
| Its historical and current commitment to its founding Mission Statement and its student body, particularly with respect to the school's focus on serving the wider community (local and global). |
| All tuition paid = low debt upon graduation. Ability to solve problems on my own without the aid of supervisors, relying mostly on peers and working after hours to be prepared. |
| The int intimacy of a small program was critical to my experience. The quality of the professors many of whom could've to Todd at higher-paying institutions, but chose to teach at Cooper because of the high quality of the students enabled by the highly selective admissions process and the full tuition scholarship policy. The library, the wood shop, and the humanities department provided a range of experiences from material to literary which were particularly significant to me, |
| The quality and reputation of my Cooper education helped me develop a professional and academic career. I appreciate the critical thought and creativity fostered in my education and the high quality of faculty and pedagogy. |
| It taught me how to challenge myself and to self teach myself. |
| I value the intellectual and artistic rigor, the incredible peers I studied with (high intellect, creativity, motivation, and diverse in background and interests), the profoundly committed and capable faculty and the campus of the East Village. All of this has left an indelible mark on my life - changing my perspective on art, meaning in life and the vital importance of culture. I still have friends that I meet with regularly who I went to Cooper with - and who agree that the four years we shared at Cooper were life changing and amazing. |
| Creative thinking. Clear English wtechnical writing. |
| I have more of an appreciation for arts and culture than any of my current peers that attended other universities. |
| Exposure to world re known faculty and diverse student body. |
| communication between different disciplines and schools, the ability to explore and pursue different forms of expression and communication guided by your genuine interests |
| The creative and critical atmosphere create by the institution is like none other. |
| Community, Art is not about $, freedom, teachers invested in their students and work. |
| My classmates, full scholarship, technical knowledge gained, living in NYC |
| At the moment I teach at Parsons The New School. I hear often my students complaining that teachers are not as engaged anymore with the students. I appreciate the level of commitment in education at Cooper Union, the desire to build life-long relations with students. I still have my mentors at the Cooper Union. |
| Sense of community. |
| The strong academic standards |
| ability to confidently breakdown a problem and find solutions |
| After doing a lot of presentations both at work as well as in my MBA program, I definitely value the emphasis my professors put on presenting information in a clear and professional manner. I believe a lot of other schools let students get by with low presentation skills and I'm glad Cooper didn't. I get a lot of compliments about my presentations and I attribute my skills to my time at Cooper. |
| Work ethic. |
| Highly motivated environment |
| It was free, so I have very little student debt. It looks good on my resume, which I think has helped me. |
| Development of critical thinking skills and working with professional artists |
| There was little hand-holding, and initiative was required to be successful. A lot like the real world. |
| Small class size allows for more faculty interaction and a more hands on approach to learning. |
| Knowledge of color theory, Art history, techniques relating to art production, understanding the quality of what makes a good professor |
| I have a very strong connection to what Cooper Union was when I attended. However, now that Cooper charges tuition it is a completely different institution. I honestly don't care about Cooper Union at all anymore and I truly hope to see them run themselves out of business/into bankruptcy. |
| The Cooper Union has provided me with a critical methodology of inquiry and close reading that continues to sustain my intellectual life even today. |
| FSAE Program |
| I learnt how to learn. I also learned some of the foundations of leadership: drive and focus. After Cooper Union, our companies ELDP program was easy. |
| The unique nature of the time at the school to explore personal creative ideas and being pushed to do so. This allowed for the development of life long personal creative endeavors and the understanding of the value of rigor. |
| Collaboration. Teacher interaction. |
| Inspiration from colleagues and professors. Quality of student work. Spirit. |
| No debt. Being in NYC. |
| The strong, unparalleled community of dedicated and focused students (artists) who pushed one another creatively and intellectually in a natural (not forced), healthy competitive environment. Also the faculty, that sincerely care for Cooper Union and want the best out of the school in general, and would work to make certain that the opportunities for new, enlivening discussion were continually available to the students. |
| Take any course plus neighboring connected schools for "free" so we can focus on our schoolwork and not a debt and become\Who we are. |
| The lifelong friendships and technical writing and oral presentations. Working at the computer center has helped me career wise in landing interviews for jobs and providing skills that I continue to use today. |
| The material I was taught allies to my daily line of work. |
| Relationships with other students |
| Critical thinking skills |
| I value the analytical problem solving skills and the long lasting friendships I've made. |
| being able to learn on my own |
| My first two years was extremely valuable for the faculties were heavily engaged with students. I had exposure of what a real world is like, what an engineer is supposed to be. |
| Cooper value independence and travel experience, which suited my personality and boardening my horizon. On the other hand, cooper has trained me to how to manage stress and pioritization and these are very helpful in the real world. |
| learning how to learn and think critically was the most important skill to acquire |
| Cooper Union instills in its students a love, a longing for knowledge. That is the single-most important aspect of a Cooper Union education, in my opinion. |
| The interdisciplinary nature of the art program, and the experience I gained working for the Saturday program. |
| Critical thinking, problem solving skills, and work ethic. |
| Ability of institution to be a melting pot for culture and ideas. |
| Great reputation, well respected, good academic foundation |
| I most value how I was able to discover my professional passion while engaging with ideas I would have never been exposed to otherwise. And I was able to do this because I did not have to take on a dangerous and permanently disabling amount of student debt that I would have had to accrue had I gone to any other college (the cooper union was still free when I went) |
| It's Cooper |
| Being a critical thinker with a large capacity for empathy. Gaining the ability to think in very acrobatic ways in and around issues (social, personal, practical, political). |
| What I value most was that my education was tuition-free. |
| I strongly value the context of a small group of focused hard-working dedicated artists learning from each other and fostering healthy competition. |
| When I was there I was very unhappy, but this unhappiness led to a type of criticality that I would not have been able to learn otherwise. I often say I didn't like it at the time but I am very glad I went there. It's not that I learned "stuff" but my brain was reprogrammed, not sure how else to describe it. |
| Both students and faculty at Cooper Union frequently value a high quality of work, and the time and effort required to meet those standards. |
| I value the seriousness with which I was expected to take my own practice and the work of others. |
| The time a spent with really smart, intelligent and gifted individuals. |
| The variety of talented and inspiring students and faculty. Exposure to ideas and movements within art history and society. Experience learning a variety of mediums and formats to express ideas. |
| Taught you to think differently and look at problems from different views. |
| the excellence of its faculty and student body - including the tremendous work ethic |
| The relationships I walked out with during my academic years at Cooper |
| Free from student debt. A recognizable name for my resume. |
| FREE TUITION |
| it was so special to spend all my time with such intelligent, talented and ambitious people. both the peers and the faculty and staff. |
| Something I've felt after Cooper, and talked to other alumni about is being grateful we didn't go to a "regular college" - by that I mean Cooper was actually focused on young adults taking coursework whereas a lot of other colleges' undergrad seems like 4 years of sleepaway camp or another 4 years of high school. |
| Small classes and strong dedication to undergraduate teaching. |
| Cooper Union prepared me think for myself in creative problem solving situations, I learned a great deal about aesthetics and art history. The importance of maintaining an artistic community. And the degree to which the student debt crisis is crippling so many young people, because I had the good fortune to earn a degree free of debt. |
| It made me resilient. |
| Cooper Union instilled a strong work ethic in me. |
| free |
| the fact that it was free |
| It was a beautiful thing to be surrounded and challenged by truly brilliant peers. |
| It was a very rigorous experience that prepared me well for grad school. Also being a graduate of this prestigious institution has also been very valuable. |
| I value the environment of passionate students and professors, and the climate of constant discourse among all parties. This school was a sanctuary for ideas and progressive thinking that is unparalleled. |
| The commitment to learning and teaching. The students are invested in the work and treat the education as a privilege |
| Ability to think critically |
| the exceptional student body |
| It was a small, unique place with special and interesting students. It also forced us to mature quickly in order to take care of ourselves in the city. These things made us unique graduates who share a common bond and fondness for the school and its quirks. |
| The independence to explore the city and discover ones own artistic voice. The large studio space (back when I went in 2004 there were large studios) |
| The diverse minds and works of artists and faculty was very inspirational. |
| Learned how to study hard |
| Free education |
| My experience with professors who challenged me to use real world principles to succeed. |
| The small classes and access to professors, along with the professors focusing on student learning and projects. I also appreciate the problem solving skills and work ethic Cooper encouraged. |
| The ability to think and act independently as a means to succeed in rigorous environments. |
| A free, rigorous and fair education is irreplaceable in this world. |
| Problem solving, team work. |
| The quality of the education was high. The classes were generally demanding; though difficult at the time, it taught me how to learn and be patient in doing so. |
| The chance to become close friends with people who are very different from myself. |
| I feel extremely proud to have graduated from Cooper. The experiences and people I met enriched my life and allowed me to appreciate all the diversity of thought and culture around me. |
| I learned how to tackle huge problems and break them up into manageable pieces. |
| It was free for everyone---so everyone was there on merit, not excluding anyone due to cost and not giving preferential admission on the account of being able to pay. I felt that this was a place that students came together to think, it was what I valued the most. |
| The space and time to really think creatively and outside of the box, considering socio-political issues that really mattered to me and my heart. There was a great deal of design studios that allowed the students to focus on independent studies, even if there was a topic or goal of study. This was incredibly valuable to me. |
| Learning how to problem solve. |
| The people! |
| https://youtu.be/APwuIe\_owHs |
| Growing with my peers. |