

THE COOPER UNION ALUMNI & PIONEER

Urtak Poll

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Abstract

A snapshot of the Urtak Poll, “Cooper Union – Have Your Say”, taken on December 10, 2011, sorted by subject, without all of the clicking.

On October 31, 2011, an Urtak Poll was set up <<https://urtak.com/u/10224>> called, “Cooper Union – Have Your Say”, with 19 questions for the Cooper Union Community. Users could suggest additional questions to a moderator, and within a couple of days 8 more questions had been added. At the time of the Open Forum, 5 more questions were added, and 3 more after that. Below is a presentation of a snapshot of the Urtak Poll results taken on December 10, 2011.

Polls such as this are not scientific – they are not based upon random sampling – and 95% of the people who participated in the poll think the school should remain tuition free. Two major impediments to an analysis of the poll are that it doesn't separate alumni responses (72%) from student responses (25%), and it doesn't separate those who took the poll prior to the Open Forum from those who took it after. It would appear that about 50 out of 189 people participated in the poll after.

In polls, it is always important to pay attention to exactly how the question is worded. The order that questions are asked can also effect the answers – this is known as self-herding behavior. On Urtak, you can perform your own analysis, sorting the results by the oldest or newest, the number of responses (which, of course, correlates to the oldest or newest), the most agreed upon and most divided, and something Urtak calls the most cared about and least cared about. A problem with Urtak is you must actually click on each answer to see the results and to see information about how many people were polled and when the question was posted. Also, the results are not sorted by subject.

Below is our presentation. There is also an associated spreadsheet available.

Who are you?

	Yes	No	#	Posted
Are you an alumni?	72%	28%	183	10/31/2011
Are you a current student?	25%	75%	187	10/31/2011
Did you read the NYTimes article from October 31st?	87%	13%	125	11/1/2011

What is your position on tuition?

Should the school remain tuition free?	95%	5%	189	10/31/2011
Does the tuition issue upset you?	92%	8%	185	10/31/2011
If tuition is charged, will Cooper Union still be Cooper Union?	19%	81%	115	11/1/2011
Would you have chosen to go to Cooper Union if it charged tuition?	21%	79%	172	10/31/2011
Would you rather see your school/program (architecture, art or engineering) be eliminated than tuition being instituted?	22%	78%	115	11/1/2011
Would you rather see the school close than be forced to charge tuition?	37%	63%	161	10/31/2011
Could you agree to a minimal tuition or higher student fees?	44%	56%	186	10/31/2011

What is your position on expansion?

Should the Cooper Union expand?	22%	78%	141	10/31/2011
Was the New Academic Building a waste of money (\$175,000,000)?	69%	31%	132	10/31/2011
Is the board using the financial issue as excuse to force tuition and expand the school?	56%	44%	139	10/31/2011
Is tuition a necessity for expansion?	29%	71%	138	10/31/2011

What is your position on the administration and trustees?

Should the administration be more transparent with students and faculty?	97%	3%	186	10/31/2011
Does Cooper have an internal communication problem?	95%	5%	176	10/31/2011
Has the administration's obscurity caused more harm than good?	93%	7%	185	10/31/2011
Do you trust the board of trustees?	15%	85%	138	10/31/2011
Do you think administration and trustees are acting in the best interest of the Cooper community?	23%	77%	144	10/31/2011
Would you believe Cooper Union has been at the brink of insolvency for 150 years?	31%	69%	113	11/1/2011
Would an independent financial review and report from a board of alumni satisfy you as to the true state of the financial situation?	86%	14%	99	11/2/2011

What is your position on possible solutions?

Will we find a solution?	92%	8%	186	10/31/2011
Would you support Cooper Union reducing its annual operating cost by 25% as a short term solution?	86%	14%	118	11/2/2011
Do we need a revolution?	61%	39%	186	10/31/2011
Would you donate \$2.75 per day, the cost less than one Starbucks coffee, to Cooper Union to begin its path to financial independence and firmly establish the tuition free tradition forever?	69%	31%	114	11/2/2011
Will you continue to donate time and/or money to Cooper if a tuition is instituted?	42%	58%	114	11/1/2011
Have you donated to the school?	56%	44%	188	10/31/2011

After the presentation by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Could the three schools be more united?	96%	4%	55	11/7/2011
Do you think tuition should be "on the table"?	23%	77%	54	11/7/2011
Did you go to any meeting at Cooper regarding this issue?	70%	30%	56	11/7/2011
Do you trust the new president, Jamshed Bharucha?	63%	38%	54	11/7/2011
Do you think a walk-out is useful?	44%	56%	56	11/7/2011

Later questions

Have you given to the Annual Fund AT LEAST ONE TIME in the last 3 years?	69%	31%	26	11/12/2011
Have you given to the Annual fund for three CONSECUTIVE years?	46%	54%	24	11/12/2011
Should The Cooper Union offer some money making short courses in business or engineering that employers would pay for?	60%	40%	7	11/19/2011

Professor Efe often said, “Come on, guys! You want me to chew your food for you, and then eat it. That’s disgusting!” Any comments or analysis of these poll results is unnecessary.

The current version of this document can be found at <<http://www.notnicemusic.com/poll.pdf>>. Corrections to this document are appreciated and, if based on substantiated facts from legitimate sources, will be implemented by the author. The original version was completed on December 10, 2011.

The Alumni Pioneer, <<http://www.notnicemusic.com/Cassandra/cooper.html>>, is a virtual newspaper with breaking news stories and links to analyses, sources and the media. It is written and formatted in an inverted-pyramid newspaper style to facilitate quick access to what is deemed the most important information. The abstract was added on January 28, 2012.