FROM THE FRONT

"Get your game on, go play"
ALL STAR SMASH MOUTH

Heads of college set to vote on dining hall access policy

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according to Jaehong Kim.

In a Tuesday email to Hopper students entitled "Our Dining Fiasco," Grace Hopper Head of College Samuel Moyn apologized "on behalf of Yale" for the overcrowding of the college's dining hall during dinner hours. Moyn wrote that "decisions at even more colleges to close to transfers have had a cascade effect on ours."

"It is regrettable that you have had to live through this period," Moyn wrote in his Tuesday email. "Please do not blame the dining hall staff at Hopper for any of this. On the contrary, they have performed heroically in the face of unprecedented demand and various logistical challenges. If you have a chance, please thank them."

Attached to his email was a post from anonymous commenting platform Fizz that had about 620 upvotes at the time it was screenshotted. The post read, "Please god fix the hopper food situation not a single seat available in the dhall I can't even eat in my own college anymore."

"It's a pretty common thing, at least among everyone in Hopper, that everyone knows that the dining hall is just kind of awful right now," Zeke Walker '30, a Grace Hopper College Council senator, said.

Overcrowding and restricted access for transfers

The Berkeley dining hall is currently closed to transfers from 5 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays. Jaehong Kim wrote that Berkeley introduced those restricted hours after October recess as a "pilot" to address concerns from Berkeley students about overcrowding.

Jaehong Kim wrote that the introduction of this pilot followed conversations with Berkeley students, dining hall staff and the Council of the Heads of College.

He also wrote that Trumbull College implemented "similar dining hours on Mondays and Wednesdays" after October break. Trumbull's dining hall is currently closed to transfers from 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. on Mondays through Thursdays, according to Yale Hospitality's website.

Alexa Martindale, the assistant director of operations for Morse College, said the Morse and Ezra Stiles dining halls, which are interconnected, have had some restricted hours since the completion of a renovation to the two colleges in 2011. Those dining halls are currently closed to transfers from 5 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. Monday through Friday.

"We implemented the restrictions in the first couple of weeks, once we realized that the volume was just too much. And there has always been a reason to keep it in place," Martindale said.

Martindale added that the Morse and Stiles dining halls have "always had a really heavy presence of groups coming in to eat," including sports teams, and that "we've always wanted to preserve the slice of time for the Morse and Stiles students to develop their community."

Those dining halls are popular with athletes due to its proximity to Payne Whitney Gymnasium.

Walker noted that key issues caused in Hopper's dining hall by the closure of other dining halls include excessively long lines, shortage of utensils and increased workload for the dining staff. He called the situation a "fiasco."

"It's been affecting how everyone wants to eat," he said. "I know a lot of people in Hopper really enjoy eating in Hopper just because it's convenient, the food is good, the dining staff we're familiar with and you can eat with your friends here."

Conversations among heads of colleges

Moyn wrote in his Tuesday email that since the denial of transfers at certain colleges was put into action, administrators have closely tracked the impact, including monitoring Fizz, in order to strategize how to relieve pressure most efficiently from both students and staff. He noted that Grace Hopper has resisted closing to transfers, although the option is still available.



Joanna Chang / Contributing Photographer
Some residential colleges have faced significant overcrowding after two new colleges moved to restrict dinner access to just their own students on some days. Next month, the Council of the Heads of College will vote on whether each college should keep that power.

Hwansoo Kim, the head of Morse College, said the Council of the Heads of College — which is composed of all fourteen residential college heads — is "currently having an intensive conversation" about restricted dining hours because "a couple of colleges are struggling with accommodating the sheer number of students."

He said that heads of college are talking to each other and to their dining staff "to gather some data," and trying to reach "some kind of consensus around these restriction hours."

Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis said in a Friday interview that he planned to have a meeting with the heads that afternoon to discuss a possible system in the future that is "a little bit more transparent across all the colleges." He later said in a Wednesday interview that he had "a brief conversation" on Friday, and would have "more details" after a longer discussion in December.

Yale's Assistant Vice President of Hospitality Jodi Westwater wrote in a Tuesday email to the News that "Yale Hospitality supports the implementation of these decisions but does not independently establish transfer restrictions."

According to Walker, the Hopper College Council has discussed the issue of overcrowding in the dining hall during their weekly Monday meeting with its head of college. He said the council thought institutional reform is difficult because the decisions regarding the closures are made independently within the individual head of college houses.

As a result, the Hopper College Council has been conducting a survey to analyze the student makeup of those dining at the college. As of Tuesday 6 p.m, after an hour of data collection, other than students from the college itself, the highest percentage of students came from Pierson.

"As of a couple of nights ago, Silliman revoked its closure policy for a time. It is my understanding that, as of November 30, Trumbull will too," Moyn wrote in his email to Grace Hopper students. "The next couple of nights are, we hope, the last of it."

Commons ended its dinner service in 2011.

Contact
SARA AGRAWAL *at sara.agrawal@yale.edu,*
ANAYAH ACCILIEN *at anayah.accilien@yale.edu and*
JOANNA CHANG *at joanna.chang@yale.edu.*

Class average could go with GPA

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However, two professors told the News that the transcript system in consideration could backfire in various ways, such as incentivizing students to take courses with higher average grades and pressuring faculty to award high average grades to ensure enough students take their courses.

Unlike at Yale, where undergraduate transcripts display only a student's individual grade earned at the end of each term, several major Canadian universities publish a class grade benchmark — either a mean or median — to contextualize student performance, Lewis said.

Lewis noted that the potential reform's primary goal is to allow students to gain a "clear understanding" of what their grade means, but he added that it is essential to have "fair and transparent grades" for post-graduate schools and employers to have a holistic understanding of a student's academic performance.

"So many students are concerned that if they don't get a 4.0, it's like failing. Well, it's not. We just need to make clear what the standards are." Lewis said. "A B+ is a good grade that shows a student has done a good job, and it's not any kind of bad sign on their transcript. And an A minus means they've done a really excellent job and an A is for truly outstanding work."

Lewis added that he believes that professors who attend faculty meetings about grade inflation generally support a hierarchy of grades where a B+ is commendable.

Two Yale faculty members cautioned against implementing class benchmarks on student transcripts, citing that students may become more strategic with course selection.

Yale Law School professor Sarath Sanga LAW '14, a member of the Committee on Trust in Higher Education, echoed concerns that the policy could "backfire" and cause more students to enroll in courses with higher average grades. That could potentially pressure faculty, whose contract renewal and promotions depend in part on course enrollment, to award higher grades.

Sanga said the College should instead adopt a consistent grading standard. The Trust Committee's report recommended a college-wide grading system and listed a 3.0 mean GPA as an example.

"Imagine a system in which anyone could print their own money, or even a language in which anyone could assign any meaning they wanted to a word. That wouldn't work," Sanga said. "The concept of a shared grading system inherently requires a shared grading standard."

Economics professor Jason Abaluck raised concerns that under the Canadian system, students might be incentivized to choose courses based on their classmate's academic performance.

"The Canadian fix is missing a crucial element. If you report grades and avg grades, this incentivizes students to take classes where their classmates are dumb," Abaluck wrote in an email to the News. "You also need to report the quality of the classmates."

Lewis received his bachelor's degree from McGill University in 1990.

Contact
ANAYAH ACCILIEN *at anayah.accilien@yale.edu and*
J OLYNDA WANG *at jolynda.wang@yale.edu.*



Garrett Curtis / Photography Editor
Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis said the change could reduce student stress about grades and contextualize each student's performance for graduate schools and employers. But some professors expressed concern that the policy could backfire.

Yale-tied lawsuit led to enforcement pause

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dard in place before August 2026," a Thursday update on the OISS website reads.

In her ruling, district judge Julia Kobick wrote that the plaintiffs are "likely to succeed on their claim that the broadcasts are arbitrary and capricious because SEVP departed from its longstanding position of treating elective for-credit training as CPT without acknowledging, let alone explaining, the change." Kobick referred to ICE's Student and Exchange Visitor Program, which issued the August messages.

The plaintiffs in the lawsuit seeking to block the guidance from going into effect include three higher education organizations and the Association of American Universities, which comprises 73 research universities including Yale.

Yale President Maurie McInnis sits on the board of the Association of American Universities and said in October that she backs the lawsuit. Yale has lobbied Congress to protect CPT along with other visa and work authorization rules for international students.

"Since 1991, the federal government has construed this definition of CPT to include any training opportunity for which students receive academic credit at a certified institution, regardless of whether that opportunity was mandatory or optional for the degree program," Kobick wrote. "In August 2026, however, SEVP changed course—without any acknowledgement—to no longer permit elective training taken for credit."

While the ruling temporarily blocked the message from being enforced nationwide, Kobick did not make a final ruling on the case and the Trump administration could appeal the order. A separate court injunction barred the government from applying the guidance to members of the AAU and other plaintiff groups.

After the August messages, OISS began reviewing Yale program requirements to determine whether they met the new criteria for CPT. While OISS Director Ozan Say did not directly say whether Yale College would be impacted, many majors do not require all students to complete an internship to graduate.

Instead, students who want credit for summer internships can enroll in "Fieldwork Practicum Analysis," which gives enrollment credit for a semester but does not count towards the 36-credit requirement for graduation.

The guidance from OISS on Thursday instructs students whose CPT requests were not processed to submit another authorization request.

"You may submit a new request through OISS Connect. OISS will review it under the restored standard. Past decisions will not be reversed automatically, so you will need to submit a new request," the statement reads.

The Trump administration's efforts to restrict CPT are part of a broader effort to crack down on the number of international students and researchers in the U.S. In 2025, President Donald Trump blocked Harvard from enrolling international students, though a federal judge issued an injunction and the case is under appeal. The administration has also attempted to place fees on Optional Practical Training, which allows up to two years of work for foreign students, and on H1-B visas.

A Monday court ruling blocked the administration from changing a rule that would limit J-1 and F-1 visas to four years, instead of the duration of the student or researcher's academic program.

Yale College matriculated 190 international students to the class of 2030.

Contact
LEO NYBERG *at leo.nyberg@yale.edu.*