# FROM THE FRONT

*"For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings / That then I scorn to change my state with kings."*
**SONNET 29** WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

## Donors less 'enthusiastic' about summer aid, Lewis says

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non-competitive summer grants resulting from the replacement of the International Study Award and Summer Experience Award with a one-time Summer Experience Grant, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions Jeremiah Quinlan previously told the News.

More than a quarter of the undergraduate student body has signed a Yale College Council–sponsored petition protesting the replacement of the two-summer guarantee with a one-time grant — a change that Lewis explained in November as a result of the impending increase in the federal tax on Yale's endowment returns. Some students have said they felt that the moves to reduce summer grant opportunities and to expand term-time financial aid for incoming students prioritized future students' interests over their own.

Lewis said last week that the replacement summer grant will allow non-competitive summer grants to be paid for mainly by endowed gifts. Due to donor priorities, he said, gifts and endowments alone were not enough to cover the International Study Award and Summer Experience Award.

"When these programs were started over the last fifteen-twenty years, there was a hope that donors would give enough money to make it possible. But the fundraising was much less than what we had hoped for. It wasn't zero, but it wasn't enough to cover the whole cost," Lewis said.

Donors to the University are "able to designate the school, program, or initiative they would like to receive their gifts," according to Diana Evans, the senior marketing and communications director for Yale's For Humanity fundraising campaign.

The campaign gathers all University fundraising efforts and organizes its priorities around four "pillars," Evans wrote in a statement to the News. Undergraduate financial aid falls under the pillar called "Leaders for a Better World."

Donors must give at least $100,000 to set up an endowed fund dedicated to undergraduate financial aid that will pay out a few thousand dollars per year, Lewis told the News in January. Last September, he said that donors who begin these personal scholarship funds can attach their names to the financial aid awards received by undergraduates whose enrollment they fund.

Those interested in funding undergraduate financial aid need not create personal funds to help cover undergraduates' tuition and cost of attendance, however.

"Donors who would like to make a straightforward cash donation for 'current use' funds may also choose to designate that those funds be used for a particular area (like undergraduate financial aid) and have the funds used in their entirety in the year they are given," Evans wrote.

Lewis told the News in January that these current-use gifts presently help to fund undergraduate financial aid programs, but that the College is working to "build the endowment" to cover these expenses in their entirety.

As of last week, just under 20 percent of donations to the University's fundraising effort for financial aid have been designated for "current use," according to Evans.

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## Yale College staff downsizing amid budget cuts, per dean

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day interview. "Often more junior people might go off to grad school or more senior people might go find a job somewhere else or even transfer to another part of the University. And we haven't filled all of those vacancies."

According to the Office of the Provost's website, the increased federal endowment tax will result in a 12.5 percent decrease in the University's ability to spend from its roughly $44 billion endowment. Lewis said last week that this reduction will result in a 7.5 percent cut to the Yale College budget, adding that the "only way" to meet this reduction was to employ fewer staff.

Last summer, University administrators announced a 5 percent reduction in non-salary expenses, delays for construction projects and lowered annual salary increases for faculty and staff, while implementing a 90-day hiring pause, in anticipation of the heightened 8 percent tax on Yale's endowment investment returns — which is scheduled to take effect in July.

Days before the expiration of the hiring pause last September, Lewis told the News that Yale College staffing was "maybe 3 or 4 percent smaller" as a result of the freeze by his "very rough estimate."

Administrators announced in October a one-time retirement incentive program, available to certain managerial and professional staff, and a reduction in budgets across the University over a three-year period. The deadline for the retirement incentive program was Dec. 31, 2025.

Lewis said on Wednesday that he could not specify the individual effects of either the hiring freeze or the retirement incentive on the number of Yale College employees.

Provost Scott Strobel and Vice President for Finance Stephen Murphy '87 did not directly respond to the News' question about how the Yale College staff reductions compared to those of other parts of the University. They instead referenced previous school-wide communications in a joint statement to the News on Thursday.

"As detailed in these communications, deans and unit leaders have prepared multi-year budget plans," Strobel and Murphy wrote, citing September and December messages to faculty and staff. "These plans include budget reductions necessitated by the tax on Yale's endowment income. They vary by each school and unit's financial dependency upon endowment support and their strategic priorities."

The administrators wrote that the University would continue to "share written updates" with the Yale community, alongside hosting "town halls and other meetings."

Murphy, Strobel and Geoffrey Chatas, the senior vice president for operations, were signatories of a December update that announced that layoffs "may be necessary" as the University navigates the elevated endowment tax. Administrators have predicted that the heightened rate will cost Yale around $300 million.

"We are hopeful that most reductions can be accomplished by eliminating open positions and through regular turnover and retirement incentives," the administrators wrote in the December memo, noting that "nearly two-thirds of the university's expenses relate to compensation and benefits."

"The retirement incentive may not enable us to meet all the budget targets we need to meet, and it may be possible that some units will need to then figure out whether or not they need to do layoffs," University President Maurie McInnis told the News in a December interview over Zoom.

Lewis' office, in Warner House, is located at 1 Hillhouse Ave.



Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis told the News that Yale College staffing has decreased by 20. / **Benjamin Hernandez,**

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## Professor stops teaching amid review over Epstein emails

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potential boss's habits in mind" — a reference to Epstein — when he sent it.

"The university does not condone the action taken by the professor or his described manner of providing recommendations for his students," Peart wrote in a statement on Tuesday. "The professor's conduct is under review. Until the review is completed, the professor will not teach his class."

Students arriving at Gelernter's classroom in Arthur K. Watson Hall on Tuesday morning were informed by Rushmeier, who took over the class, that Gelernter had been suspended from interacting with students, Johann Ortiz '26, a student in the class, said in an interview.

"All she said was that Gelernter is suspended from interacting with students. He's not teaching. That's all that she said," Ortiz said when asked about if Rushmeier has explained Gelernter's absence.

Rushmeier told the News that she will be teaching Gelernter's course for the rest of the term. She later wrote in an email to the News that she has not had contact with anyone in the University administration about the review of Gelernter's conduct.

In his Tuesday Canvas announcement, reviewed by the News, Gelernter referred to his exchanges with Epstein as "personal" and "private."

"If someone handed you a a stack of other people's private correspondence, would you dive in and read them? Of course not. Gentlemen and ladies don't read each other's mail (Courtesy 101.)" Gelernter wrote.

Gelernter wrote that the student he described "had become a family friend" and added that she had stayed at his and his wife's house "at least twice."

In the Canvas announcement, Gelernter described the job for which he recommended the student in 2011 as "strictly on the financial side of his private bank." Gelernter said the student he recommended knew who Epstein was, but "not that he was a felon & sex criminal!" He added that the student knew the job paid well and that Epstein "hadn't made a move on anyone since moving to new york."

In 2008, Epstein pleaded guilty to two state felony prostitution charges in Florida and was required to register as a sex offender. Gelernter wrote on Canvas that he did not know throughout their communications that Epstein was a sex offender.

Four students in "The User Interface" told the News that the revelations about their professor's contact with Epstein have been jarring.

"It's been a crazy situation so far," Ian Gotcher GRD '26 said.

According to Ortiz and lecture slides that Rushmeier presented in Tuesday's class — visible to a News reporter through a classroom window — future lectures "will be video, guest lecturers, student presentations." For most of the session, the class watched a video of an interview with Don Norman, a designer and professor emeritus of the University of California, San Diego.

Two of the students who spoke to the News said they had not seen Gelernter's Canvas announcement or another one by Rushmeier and were surprised when they walked in and saw Rushmeier teaching.

Kris Aziabor '26 and Joaquin Santoscoy-MacPhee '28, who are both in his class, said they found Gelernter's emails with Epstein and his subsequent defense of them shocking.

"I think it's very upsetting and disgusting," Santoscoy-MacPhee said.

In his Canvas post, Gelernter thanked the class and speculated that it could be the last one of his lengthy career at Yale.

"You've been a marvelous class -- and not only on intellectual terms. You're way out of the ordinary, and I'll always remember that. If my very last class at Yale turns out to be CPSC 450(or a piece of it),e--then a thousand thanks. A million. You know what I mean," Gelernter wrote.

Yale Course Search now lists Rushmeier as the course's instructor.

Fifteen students are taking "The User Interface," according to Course Demand Statistics.



Yale computer science professor David Gelernter — who has defended his recently released email correspondence with the sex offender Jeffrey Epstein — wrote to his students on Tuesday that he was "relieved" of teaching their class. / **Garret Curtis, Photography Editor**

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