NEWS

"Oh, your love is sunlight."
SUNLIGHT HOZIER

YCC calls on Yale to end Trump negotiations, defends admissions policies

BY EMILY AKBAR
STAFF REPORTER

In its first meeting of the school year, the Yale College Council Senate endorsed the demands of a teach-in last Tuesday entitled "Democratize Yale" — including a call for Yale to end its negotiations with the Department of Justice over allegations of racial discrimination in its admissions processes — and advanced three policy proposals.

On Sunday, senators nearly unanimously passed a statement joining in calls for reform of University governance and policy, including the adoption of free expression and academic freedom protections. YCC President Alex William '28 spoke at the rally where the demands were expressed but did so in his "personal capacity," he said after the protest.

The council's endorsement marks an expansion of student leaders' support for reform.

"Yale must exit settlement negotiations with the DOJ and publicly commit to defending its admissions policies in court should the need arise, because those policies are lawful and because recruiting an outstandingly well-qualified student body necessarily includes Black and Latine students," the statement, which passed with one vote in opposition, reads.

It was sponsored by the YCC alongside the Endowment Justice Collective, the Black Student Alliance at Yale, Mecha de Yale — a student social justice group — and the Yale College Democrats.

Marah Rigaud '28, who represented the Black Student Alliance at Yale at the council meeting, spoke in favor of the call for Yale to cease negotiations with the federal government. She said that such a settlement would disproportionately target Black and Latine students.

"I've heard since my first year, even after being in the incoming class after affirmative action has ended, that our place on this campus is questionable, and that in general we've sometimes been labeled as unqualified to be on this campus," Rigaud said.

The statement's other demands, which echo those listed on the "Democratize Yale" website, include a call for Yale to reform the selection and operation of the Yale Corporation.

Siena Grouf '29, who represented the Endowment Justice Collective at the meeting, read aloud the statement's proposed changes to Corporation policies.

"Trustee meeting agendas must be published online one week prior to each board meeting, minutes must be made publicly available before the next scheduled meeting, and board meetings must be open to the public, livestreamed online and include time for public comment," Grouf read.

At Sunday's meeting, Chen described the statement's demands as "all rooted in the same problems with democracy at Yale."

He explained that the statement was intended to consolidate previous organizing around shared governance, free speech, academic freedom and Yale's interactions with the federal government.

"The YCC, representing the Yale undergraduate student body, proudly endorses and joins in these calls for reform," the statement passed on Sunday reads.

Beyond the statement, senators approved three policy proposals that YCC members will take to University administrators.

One proposal, sponsored by YCC Speaker of the Senate Kyler Parker '29, Silliman Senator Michael Canudas '28 and Trumbull Senator Siena Valdivia '28, calls for every Yale College student to receive at least 20 gigabytes of Google Drive storage.

Students who enrolled in Yale on or after August 15, 2023 currently have a quota of five gigabytes, while students who enrolled before that date received 20 gigabytes, according to a Yale Information Technology Services website.

"Michael, Siena and I are prepared with this proposal to finally get a clear answer for why we have a pitifully small amount of Drive storage, and hopefully increase that to at least 20 gigabytes," Parker said during the meeting. "I hope to push as far as we can with Drive storage."

Benjamin Franklin Senator Jaden Franklin '29 asked Parker whether the new proposal would interfere with the storage that Yale provides to students through Microsoft's Onedrive service. Per an ITS website, Yale students have access to 2 terabytes of storage via Onedrive.

Parker responded that the goal was not to bargain away Yale-provided Microsoft Onedrive storage.

"Most of Yale's peer institutions provide comparable Onedrive storage in addition to reasonable Google Drive storage. There's no reason Yale should only provide one or the other," he wrote in a text message to the News.

Senators also backed a proposal from Silliman Senator Johnathan McGee '28 to develop a "Navigating Yale Resource Guide" for first years. The guide would consolidate information about academic advising, mental health care, accessibility services, financial resources, cultural centers and residential college support into a single document, McGee explained.

The Senate also approved a proposal seeking to reduce health insurance costs for students taking leaves of absence.

According to the proposal, active students pay $3,764 per year for Yale Health Hospitalization and Specialty Coverage, while undergraduates on medical leave must purchase an affiliate plan that costs $11,332. Students on non-medical leave face a $10,832 annual premium.

Sponsored by Health and Accessibility Policy Chair Justin Kung '28 and co-sponsored by Chief of Staff Brendan Kaminski '28, the proposal calls for students on approved medical or academic leaves to remain eligible for the standard-rate health insurance plan for as many as two semesters and one summer.

Kung described the current system as effectively imposing a threefold increase on students who step away from Yale, including students who take leave for mental health reasons. The proposal argues that the additional cost could discourage students from taking medically necessary time away.

Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis will attend the YCC Senate meeting on Oct. 11.

Contact
EMILY AKBAR *at*
emily.akbar@yale.edu



KALINA SABALA MONTES / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
On Sunday, the Yale College Council Senate backed demands expressed last Tuesday by student and faculty protesters for reforms to University governance and claimed Yale's admissions policies — alleged to be discriminatory by the federal government — are lawful.

After first years chose classes at home, some say timeline drew stress

BY ANAYAH ACCILIEN
STAFF REPORTER

This summer, members of the class of 2030 were the first to navigate Yale's course registration systems virtually — a mode that some students said made it difficult to get individualized attention as they chose classes.

The change to Yale College's first-year registration timeline allowed incoming first years to begin registering for courses six days before moving in. When the change was announced in the spring, Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis said it was intended to reduce stress brought on by the hourslong registration period that traditionally occurs after first-year move-in.

Seth Baker '27 said that based on his experience as a Saybrook first-year counselor and those of his fellow FroCos, moving the registration time earlier did not eliminate the stress of course selection. He cited technical challenges he encountered when trying to support his first years, adding that timezone differences can create difficulties when students choose classes from home.

"I didn't have any international students, but a lot of my fellow FroCos do," Baker said. "So you're having to get up in the middle of the night in order to register for classes."

That concern was cited by three former head FroCos in a petition penned last spring that protested the registration timeline change. The document, which was signed by over 100 former FroCos, said the new schedule would result in disparities in access to registration resources and limit the ability of future FroCos to advise first year students.

In March, Lewis said the timeline adjustment would be accompanied by a change that designated students' residential college deans as their default academic advisors.

"The new system of students meeting with their deans by Zoom during the summer and registration opening in mid-August seems to be working well. Residential college deans tell me it has helped them to get to know their students sooner," Lewis wrote in an email to the News last week.

Baker described the new registration process as "inequitable," echoing concerns addressed in the spring petition. He said he experienced difficulty in trying to support first-generation, low-income students virtually because he realized that those who needed the most help were the same ones that felt "more awkward" and "nervous" to reach out.

Matthew Chu '30 said that Yale provided useful resources before the day when registration opened. But when a course on his worksheet was labeled "pending," or when he was waitlisted, he said, he experienced more stress than he anticipated because he did not know while at home whether the issue was on Yale's end or his own.

Chu said he attended a meeting with his dean and found it useful as a confirmation of some of the classes he chose to take this semester.

"We didn't talk too much about what you're aiming for in the fall, but more of how I'm gonna set up for the future," Chu said.

Jacob Glover '30 said he attended his scheduled meeting with his dean, which he found was "a good first step" to confirm that he was meeting his requirements, but that the format made it "very difficult to give individual advice."

"I feel very lucky because I did DS, so most of my classes were guaranteed. So I didn't have that stress," Glover said to the News, referring to the Directed Studies program.

Lewis wrote on Monday that the new registration timeline for first years still allows students to adjust their courses during add/drop period.

"Regarding first-year advising, this was the first year of implementing a new system after three years of planning," Lewis wrote. "There might still be a few kinks to work out but I think the new system has already contributed to first-year students having better information and advice when they choose their courses."

Baker said that despite disagreeing with the registration timeline change, he does think that there has been an increase in advising for first-years, which he believes makes incoming students more prepared. He argued, however, that available advising jumped from being "virtually non-existent" to there being "too many resources," and characterized first years' mandatory 15-minute Zoom meeting with a residential college dean as dispensable.

Aisha Salad '30, a first-year FGLI student, said she did not meet with her dean. She said because she participated in First-Year Scholars at Yale, a six-week summer program to help transition incoming first years and to connect them with the FGLI community, she entered registration "with somewhat of an idea" of how the process worked. Still, she said she "did feel a little lost."

She said she did not speak with her FroCo before the add/drop period began, though they had provided resources and office hour slots for help that she has yet to use.

"I'm in Intro to Ethics, and I signed up for the class thinking it would be a very easy class," Salad said. "And now every time I say, 'I'm in Intro to Ethics,' I get a certain expression on people's faces. I don't think I would've signed up for it if I had known before, but now all the other classes I could have done instead of that class are full."

Add/drop period ends on Friday at 5 p.m.

Contact
ANAYAH ACCILIEN *at*
anayah.accilien@yale.edu.

Yale trustees to reduce in-person meetings amid calls for transparency

BY ARIA LYNN-SKOV
STAFF REPORTER

Yale's board of trustees is set to be less present on campus this year, at least for official gatherings, after removing one of its annual in-person meetings from its schedule.

The Yale Corporation's website currently lists four meetings for the 2026-27 academic year, a decrease from the standard minimum of five established in its bylaws. According to Yale spokesperson Karen Peart, the trustees will meet virtually throughout the year as well. The change comes amid student and faculty calls for increased transparency with the trustees, who form the University's highest governing body.

"The trustees adjusted their in-person meeting schedule from five to four meetings a year to be more consistent with practices at peer institutions," Peart wrote in a Wednesday email to the News. "This schedule includes off-cycle virtual meetings to supplement in-person meetings and allows the trustees to maintain regular engagement."

Of the seven other Ivy League institutions, the comparable governing bodies of Brown and the University of Pennsylvania meet in full three times a year; Dartmouth's, Cornell's and Columbia's meet at least four times; Princeton's meets five times per year; and Harvard's meets seven to eight times, according to the Harvard Crimson and universities' bylaws and websites.

"Trustees also meet with students throughout the year, including at each in-person meeting through the standing Student Liaisons Committee, and many trustees participate in a variety of campus activities and events outside the formal meeting schedule," Peart wrote.

During the Corporation's February campus visit last year — the one removed from the upcoming year's calendar — around 25 invited student leaders had lunch with the trustees.

Ahead of the Corporation's April meeting last spring, trustees Maryana Iskander LAW '03 and Fred Krupp '75 each spoke at events hosted by the Yale Alumni Nonprofit Alliance.

In a Wednesday interview, Diego Loustaunau '27 — an organizer with the Endowment Justice Collective, a student group that often advocates for greater transparency from the trustees — criticized the reduction of in-person meetings.

"They don't want to hear the dissent of students, faculty, staff and alumni who are routinely left out of decision making processes, and they don't want to be held accountable to these constituencies who regularly mobilize and invite the trustees to meet with them when they are on campus," Loustaunau said.

The 18th recommendation of the Committee on Trust in Higher Education's report starts with the sentence, "Build trust with the trustees."

Contact
ARIA LYNN-SKOV *at*
aria.lynn-skov@yale.edu.