OPINION

GUEST COLUMNIST

SULLIVAN HO

Internship limits hurt

Are international students competing with domestic students for internships?

That's what Tom Dawber '28 argues in his recent column. The piece comes after an Immigration and Customs Enforcement memo led Yale to consider tightening restrictions on the Curricular Practical Training program, which allows international students to pursue American internships. Dawber celebrates these restrictions, arguing that fewer opportunities for international students will mean more internships left over for American students.

But it's not obvious that international students compete with domestic students in the first place.

While employers don't have to sponsor a Curricular Practical Training internship, they do have to sponsor the work visa if the student receives a return offer. This means international students come with more eventual paperwork and future risk — time and money spent training interns may be wasted if that student doesn't end up winning the H-1B lottery. As a result, employers only take international students if they demonstrate capabilities that clearly outperform domestic students.

Ask any international student, and they'll be able to quote this exact logic back to you — proof that it's already hard enough already to get an internship. When you add in the many other factors that make it hard for international students to live alone for a summer, the reality becomes clear: international students aren't outcompeting domestic students at a variety of jobs since they only participate in a narrow slice of the internship market.

But let's take Dawber at his highest ground — every international Yale student that gets an internship prevents a domestic student from getting one. Is this good or bad? To understand, we need to consider the counterfactuals. What happens to each set of students if they don't get internships?

If a domestic student doesn't get an internship, the majority of them will still stay in the United States to work. Missing out on an internship rarely sends domestic students searching for opportunities abroad. But the situation is different for international students. When they miss out on internships, the default is not staying in the United States. Come senior year, if there's no employer willing to sponsor their visa, they exit the American economy.

What happens when immigrants are kicked out of our economy? We don't have to look very far for some recent examples.

In 2025, President Donald Trump's deportations and border restrictions led to net negative migration in America for the first time in 50 years. The impact was the opposite of what immigration hawks might project: native-born unemployment increased.

Why? Because immigration isn't a zero-sum game. When we let immigrants in, the so-called pie of American resources grows, as they contribute to innovation, pay taxes and create demand for goods. Immigrants start businesses at a higher rate and are more likely to contribute to the economy through work.

I'm not saying that Americans should stop having kids and start adopting immigrants. What I am saying is this — if the average immigrant is a net positive for the economy, how much more so are the high-achieving international students here at Yale? Findings support this conclusion: immigrants with bachelor's degrees on average contribute $330,000 more in taxpayer dollars than they use in services. That's hundreds of thousands of dollars that can be redistributed to Americans in the form of healthcare, food stamps and unemployment payments, not even including the economic activity they contribute outside of taxes.

Much of the controversy around immigration concerns low-skill or undocumented immigrants. Voices across the political spectrum, including the Cato Institute, the Manhattan Institute, the American Enterprise Institute and 79 percent of registered voters — including 71 percent of Trump voters and 87 percent of Harris voters — agree that high-skill immigration is a good thing. It's senseless to prevent one of the most rigorously vetted immigrant pools in the world — Yale international students — from staying in the American economy.

I don't think Yale should try to defy ICE or circumvent the restrictions. The memo from ICE is very clear: schools identified as abusing Curricular Practical Training "to create work opportunities rather than academic studies" could have their right to enroll international students revoked. While Dawber is correct that the administration is within their rights to enforce the written law this way, that doesn't mean it's a good idea.

Yale students — domestic and international alike — should mourn the loss of this program rather than celebrate it. And the Yale administration should consider what policies they can adjust to soften the blow.

One such approach could be to expand the existing opportunities here on campus. As it becomes harder for international students to secure off-campus opportunities, the number of applications for fellowships, research and grants is likely to increase dramatically. To accommodate this, Yale should consider expanding these programs and reserving some spots for international students who may not have other options. Yale should also examine if there are internships they could in good faith certify as "integral to the curriculum" according to ICE's requirement.

While none of these options are perfect, they represent our best options for maintaining American prosperity for all of us.

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GUEST COLUMNIST

MICHAEL SKURATOVSKY

De-Democratize Yale

Recently, in negotiations with the Trump administration, Yale University agreed to impose the following regulation on its faculty and students: "If any Scholar Shall deny the Holy Scriptures or any part of Them to be the Word of God: or be guilty of Heresy or any Error directly Tending to Subvert the Fundamentals of Christianity, and continuing Obstinate Therein after the first and Second Admonition, He shall be Expelled."

Just kidding — that's from the Regulations at Yale College of 1745. But, obviously, Yale has liberalized its policies regarding freedom of speech since the 18th century, hasn't it?

Democratize Yale, which presents itself as an "unprecedented coalition of students, staff, faculty and alumni," demands that Yale defend "Free Speech and Assembly." Its platform champions Yale's great tradition of progressive political demonstration. But the University's treatment of dissent from that tradition receives far less attention.

In 1963, the Yale Political Union invited Alabama Governor George Wallace to speak to students. Earlier that year, Wallace famously coined the anti-civil rights rallying cry, "segregation now, segregation tomorrow and segregation forever." What was Yale's response? Provost Kingman Brewster Jr. '41 urged the Union to withdraw the invitation, citing, "the damage which Governor Wallace's appearance would do to the confidence of the New Haven community in Yale and the feelings of the New Haven Negro population."

This incident is cited by the Woodward Report — Yale's official policy on freedom of expression — as one of Yale's failures to protect speech. But not just any speech — right-wing speech. In fact, the Woodward Report contrasts Yale's treatment of Wallace with that of the Black Panther Party in 1970-71. During the New Haven Black Panther trials, in which several Black Panther members were prosecuted for kidnapping, torturing and murdering Alex Rackley, Yale opened its campus to demonstrators, suspended regular academic affairs and provided protestors with food, shelter, first aid and even child care. Of course, Brewster's concern that Wallace's speech would be contrary to "the interest of law and order as well as town-gown relations" would have been completely unfounded for the Black Panthers. Oh, wait:

"Everybody knows that pigs are depraved traducers that violate the lives of human beings, and that there ain't nothing wrong with taking the life of a motherf------ pig," founding member and chief of staff of the Black Panther Party David Hilliard to 5,000 Yale students at Ingalls Rink, on our very own campus. But this was just free speech — surely, it incited no violence! About that:

"But when a light-skinned man—later found to be a harmless Lebanese architecture student with mental problems—stumbled toward the stage, Hilliard's Panther bodyguards tore into him with kicks and punches," Paul Bass '82 and Doug Rae, a School of Management professor, wrote in their book Murder in the Model City.

Are you starting to notice a pattern?

The different treatment of left- and right-wing speakers continues today.

In 2022, during a Federalist Society panel at Yale Law School hosting a discussion between conservative lawyer Kristen Waggoner and progressive lawyer Monica Miller, over 100 students packed the room, stomping, banging and chanting, "F--- you, FedSoc." They shouted down the panelists so loudly that other classes at the Law School were disturbed. Naturally, in strict adherence to the Woodward Report, Yale immediately called the police to detain the disruptors and allow the event to continue.

According to the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, "the cacophony persisted for the majority of the event, and though panelists struggled to project their voices over the noise, the audience remained largely unable to hear them... Deans, administrators, even the Yale police officers stationed at the event refused to lift a finger to address the noise."

Did I get you there? Progressive agitators orchestrated a coordinated effort to drown out the speech of a lawyer at a sanctioned event at Yale Law School because she was a right-winger. Yale's response?

Officers were present "at the event was 'not to enforce YLS policy but rather to protect the safety of the demonstrators and those they were protesting.'"

Needless to say, Yale declined to pursue disciplinary action against the students.

This brings us back to Democratize Yale. Under its free speech demand, it claims, "The Plaza has always spoken," citing our good friends, the Black Panthers. Curiously, they make no mention of the suppression of George Wallace, despite piously citing the very report whose existence it explicitly justified!

Democratize Yale's historical reconstruction of free speech at Yale is quite curious. One is led to believe that after Yale adopted the Woodward Report in 1975, it was a free speech paradise until its recent "democratic backsliding." But as we have seen, Yale's free speech haven was, sadly, open to only one side of the political border.

> NONETHELESS, WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT DEMOCRATIZE YALE IS A PARTISAN, IDEOLOGICALLY CAPTURED ORGANIZATION. IT IS EQUALLY CLEAR THAT YALE IS A PARTISAN, IDEOLOGICALLY CAPTURED INSTITUTION.

There is much more to say about free speech and Democratize Yale. Personally, I don't believe Yale has ever had freedom of speech, nor do I think it is even possible or desirable. I don't even necessarily support the Trump administration's demands for Yale and other universities. Nonetheless, what is clear is that Democratize Yale is a partisan, ideologically captured organization. It is equally clear that Yale is a partisan, ideologically captured institution.

Yale will remain that way, whether its holy scriptures are the Bible or "A Theory of Justice" by John Rawls. It will remain a breeding ground for those intellectuals, politicians and journalists who most influence the American progressive orthodoxy, no matter this temporary setback. But until Democratize Yale or another organization seriously addresses the suppression of right-wing speech and acknowledges Yale's ideological capture, right-wingers will look with amused indifference at the left for experiencing, for two years, what the right has experienced for decades. But for now, what is clear is that Democratize Yale does not mean freeing Yale — it means returning it to its progressive shackles.

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GUEST COLUMNISTS

RICK TAFT AND FELLOW ALUMNI

President McInnis, will you respond?

Dear President McInnis,

We are members of the group of Yale Law School graduates who wrote you and the Board on Sept. 2 explaining our grave concerns about any Yale agreement with the Department of Justice and earnestly requesting a chance to meet with you. We received no reply of any kind.

On Sept. 16, the Yale Daily News reported your assertion that Yale is in compliance with federal law regarding race and admissions. You plainly imply that the contrary position taken by the DOJ in its findings is wrong.

Your implicit assertion that the DOJ findings are wrong comports with the conclusion in the letter sent to you in July by the Sher Tremonte law firm retained by the Yale chapter of the AAUP: "In sum, the DOJ's factual findings are bogus — cherry-picked, statistically weak, and presented without appropriate context or support in the record."

You have stated several times that the University is following required procedure. However, the Justice Department rules give the recipient of findings like those formally conveyed to Yale two options: enter voluntary settlement discussions or contest the factual accuracy of the findings in subsequent proceedings. We are deeply concerned that Yale has chosen the wrong path. Why not contest the baseless findings? That would be entirely consistent with the procedural requirements of the law and more important, avoid the grotesque specter of Yale's voluntary entry into a settlement agreement that would, like those signed by some other universities, fundamentally damage its independence and integrity.

Sincerely,

Peter Broderick LAW '71
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