FROM THE FRONT

"Beverly Hills, that's where I want to be."
BEVERLY HILLS WEEZER

Medical school faculty mixed on Yale's Trump posture

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tice Department is also investigating but has not released letters of findings about.

While four interviewed faculty members with connections to the School of Medicine were mixed on how hard-lined Yale should be about negotiating with the Justice Department, they largely shared worries about potential targeted federal funding cuts that have prompted other universities to settle with the federal government.

Min Wu, an associate professor of cell biology, said while long-term damage from a potential settlement is not quantifiable, such an agreement may cause short-term harm.

She speculated that the amount of money the University might have to pay to settle, as estimated by other universities' deals, could be compared to the costs of a legal challenge and the freezing of federal funds in weighing the harms of settling.

"We have to speak in the numbers," Wu said. "Maybe that is the only way we can actually make a point where people might listen."

In a July 2025 settlement, Columbia agreed to pay $200 million to the federal government over alleged violations to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Since then, Brown, Cornell and Northwestern, among other universities, have made financial settlements with the Trump administration. Other universities, such as the University of Virginia, have struck deals that do not include payments.

Last spring, after Harvard refused to comply with the federal government's demands that the university limit student activism and change its admissions policies, the government froze $2.2 billion in Harvard's research grants and contracts.

While McInnis has been tight-lipped about Yale's negotiations with the Trump administration, she has emphasized that it "looks very different from what has been reported in the media about many of our peers, whether that is Harvard or Columbia or Brown or Northwestern."

"The first people, the most vulnerable people, they are going to be the post-docs," Wu said about the impacts of possible federal funding freezes. "If you don't have federal money coming in, and if the University decides not to step up to fill this vacuum, then people have to be let go. And then a year later, you can hire them back, but people's careers are ruined in the process of doing this."

Nikhil Malvankar, who teaches in the Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry Department both in the College and in the School of Medicine, said he did not think that negotiating with the government was inherently a bad thing or that it would necessarily undermine diversity. He felt supported by the Yale administration amid the negotiations, he added.

"I'm quite glad, especially with the efforts of our president, with every interaction I had with her, and others, especially the provost, they want to maintain scientific integrity and diversity. But at the same time, they want to make sure that they are strictly following the laws," Malvankar said, referring to the 2023 Supreme Court ruling which outlawed race conscious admissions practices.

While McInnis told the News last week she believes Yale's admissions processes are following the law, she acknowledged that the 2023 ruling has yet to be interpreted in court and that "none of us know exactly how that is going to be interpreted."

Ifat Levy, a professor of comparative medicine, wrote in an email to the News that "what I'm mostly experiencing is uncertainty and worry."

"In the absence of information, I can only hope that Yale does not cave in to the DOJ or any other branch of government," she wrote.

Wu also said she felt "very offended" that the Department of Justice was using Asian Americans as "scapegoats" to justify claims that the School of Medicine was racially discriminating in favor of Black and Hispanic students.

Gregg Gonsalves '11 SPH '15 '17 , a professor at the Yale School of Public Health — which was a part of the medical school until 2024 — said that Yale settling with the Department of Justice "doesn't protect any of us in biomedical research from what the Trump administration is doing."

Gonsalves cited many Trump administration initiatives to limit biomedical research, pointing to the executive branch's recent plans to create an external committee for evaluating National Institute of Health grants. Gonsalves said actions such as these would target researchers from all universities.

"You're going to be targeted on the basis of the work you do," he said. "To believe that there's going to be a carve out, that this applies to everybody but Yale, is not credible."

Yale research labs have already felt the impacts of strained relations with the Trump administration. Malvankar said his lab has been hurt by grant delays and reductions.

Malvankar said he applied for funding from the National Science Foundation in December 2025. In May, Malvankar learned from an article published in Nature that Yale was among a handful of universities whose NSF grants had been "locked."

Malvankar said that after waiting a longer time than expected, he received official notice of his reward in August, with a 25 percent reduction.

"I had to let go of people in my lab, and put research on hold. And so it is just a really scary time," he said.

Additionally, two post-docs Malvankar works with, both of whom are Chinese, have been waiting for their visas for several months and have not been able to work, Malvankar said.

"I decided to not take any salary for three months of summer and use that money to pay for these original visa fees and premium processing," Malvankar said.

Yale School of Medicine was founded in 1810.

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Aid back after student advocacy

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vide greater support to students receiving full financial aid and negotiate directly with storage vendors.

Over the last few years, Yale gradually reduced the summer storage support it provided to low-income students — from $400 in 2023 to $340 in 2024 to $225 in 2025 — before eliminating the funding altogether this year.

In April, after Lewis confirmed that summer storage support would not continue this summer, the Dwight Hall Student Executive Committee launched its own storage initiative for students who qualified for "zero parent share" financial aid awards.

The program ultimately served nearly 200 students, who stored 1,873 items total and each paid a flat $50 fee, according to Alexandra Ruiz '28, a co-coordinator of the student committee. Ruiz said there was no limit on the number of items participating students could store.

"So many students were incredibly grateful for our program," Ruiz wrote in an email. "It showed just how many students were negatively affected by the phase out."

Julian Kolthammer '29, a logistics coordinator for the student committee's summer storage initiative, said the group's experience showed that a summer storage support model that utilizes campus space would help Yale provide storage at a lower cost.

"If Yale were to secure space on campus for storage, a model similar to ExComm's 2026 initiative would be financially self-sustaining, with all students on any amount of financial aid only needing to pay a flat rate of $50 for unlimited items," he wrote in an email, referring to the Dwight Hall Student Executive Committee.

Under the model announced on Tuesday, Kolthammer wrote, students would pay an average of $306 for storage while Yale would contribute an average of $283 per student. Using indoor campus space, he added, could help both students and the University save money.

"In 2011, the Yale College Council confronted essentially the same problem, rejected an expensive commercial storage proposal, and built a lower-cost model using indoor space provided by Yale," Kolthammer wrote.

Ruiz said the storage funding model announced on Tuesday may not be expansive enough to cover students' needs.

According to Ruiz, the median user of the student committee's program this summer stored nine items, while 74 percent of participants stored more than six. The $300 maximum College contribution is designed to cover roughly six standard boxes, Ruiz said, but some students may need more.

According to Ruiz, Yale has previously used campus space for student storage, including at West Campus, which she said could offer a less expensive alternative to outside storage vendors.

"I think this program is a significant achievement and will help our FGLI peers tremendously," Ruiz wrote. "Still, there is historical precedent for a much more inexpensive solution – for both Yale and, thus, students due to the mediated pressure on Yale then to subsidize for students – that focuses on accessing available storage space, rather than an outside vendor, such as Dorm Room Movers."

YCC initially pursued a model in which students could store their belongings in residential colleges, Chen said. After discussions with Yale, the council ultimately reached a solution similar to the model that was phased out.

Chen said the five-year commitment gives future YCC leaders a basis for continuing to hold the College accountable for maintaining the support.

"In theory, there's no guarantee," Chen said. "The biggest guarantee is the public accountability and public commitment that Yale College has made."

After Lewis said that summer storage funding would not continue this summer, the YCC created a new stipend program that sought to help affected students.

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Lewis defers to McInnis' comments

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achieved by legal means," Lewis said. "It's diversity of all kinds, backgrounds and viewpoints and life experiences and so on, we try to seek those kinds of diversity as well."

Yale President Maurie McInnis said last week that the University's ongoing negotiations with the federal government to resolve the inquiry do not involve the College. Though McInnis began publicly communicating with Yale affiliates about the investigations in July, Lewis has maintained public silence.

When asked on Tuesday if Yale College admissions discriminated against white and Asian applicants, Lewis declined to comment on the investigations.

"I think, on that, I just should refer you to President McInnis' comments because of the ongoing nature of that," Lewis said.

McInnis also said last week that she believes Yale's admissions practices follow the law but that she does not know how courts will interpret the Supreme Court's affirmative action ruling. She added that she does not comment on ongoing legal matters.

On Tuesday, Lewis told the News that he does not want to comment on the investigation because of "the legal nature" of the probe.

He said that diversity is important at the College.

Following the 2023 ruling that struck down affirmative action, Lewis and Dean of Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid Jeremiah Quinlan '03 sent a joint statement to the Yale College community expressing concern over the decision and affirming that Yale would comply with the law.

Lewis and Quinlan also said they will continue efforts to "make Yale a leader in welcoming and educating students of all backgrounds."

The webpage with Lewis and Quinlan's statement is no longer active.

While he declined to comment on the negotiations, Lewis spoke on other issues regarding Yale's relationship with the Trump administration.

He said that although the Trump administration's restrictions on international student visas and summer internships are mainly an issue for graduate and professional schools, he understands that Yale College students are also affected by the constraints.

"We're working very closely with the Office of International Students and Scholars to look at how to allow international students to take summer internships," Lewis said. "We're also working with them on making sure that international students are able to come and study at Yale."

Lewis is up for reappointment this academic year, the last of his first term as dean.

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Garrett Curtis / Photography Editor
Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis has not commented on the Justice Department investigation into Yale College admissions. He continued his silence in a Tuesday interview.

Moratorium passes unanimously

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"I think we as a city should be really cautious about how we're moving forward in this new era of data centers and AI," Ward 1 Alder Elias Theodore '27 said in an interview with the News after Tuesday's meeting. "This moratorium period will allow us to come together, find the experts, and really understand what our policy should be moving forward."

The data center moratorium arrives amid a larger national reckoning over artificial intelligence and its infrastructure demands. Data centers that support AI are unpopular with the American public, with 61% of voters saying they oppose AI data centers in a September New York Times/Sienna poll.

States and cities across the country, including New York State, Seattle and Denver, have imposed similar yearlong holds on data center construction. Connecticut cities West Haven, Trumbull, Morris and Groton have also imposed moratoriums of varying lengths.

Theodore said it is important for the city to consider its data center strategy carefully because the facilities may "take up large plots of land and make a lot of noise and use up a lot of energy."

The city rule change, which was originally proposed in July by Ward 27 Alder Richard Furlow, describes the pause as "necessary to provide the City with sufficient time to study and evaluate the impacts of data center development and adopt appropriate zoning regulations governing data centers."

The final version of the amendment includes an update which exempts "quantum computing or life sciences research facilities associated with the New Haven Quantum and Life Sciences Innovation Cluster" from the moratorium.

Theodore, a member of the Board of Alders Legislation Committee, said some quantum buildings "verge on the purpose of data centers in a much smaller capacity or have some similarities." The committee, which reviewed the amendment, had to "work out some of that language," Theodore said.

New Haven has recently seen a surge in quantum investment. In September of 2025, state officials announced a $50.5 million grant for research and infrastructure related to quantum and life sciences. $10 million of that award went to QuantumCT, a public-private quantum innovation initiative co-led by Yale and the University of Connecticut.

Members of the legislation committee urged the board to vote "yes" on the pause at Tuesday's meeting.

In an interview after the meeting, Ward 22 Alder and Legislation Committee Vice-Chair Jeanette Morrison said it was important to review the potential costs of data centers in New Haven.

"As a city, we need to really, really understand what kind of impact it's gonna put on our city, on our residents," Morrison said. "If they're using a lot of electricity, a lot of water, a lot of those things, someone has to pay for that, and a lot of times it ends up being the residents and not the data centers or those owners."

In 2021, the Connecticut General Assembly passed a bill that offers tax incentives to qualifying data centers to build in the state. That law is still in effect.

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