FROM THE FRONT

"I'm singin' in the rain, just singin' in the rain"
SINGIN' IN THE RAIN GENE KELLY

Grading should minimize stress, faculty senate says

RESOLUTION FROM PAGE 1

In May, Harvard's faculty voted to cap A's at roughly 20 percent starting next fall. Amanda Claybaugh, Harvard's dean of undergraduate education, said in August that Harvard could enforce the grade cap by automatically converting all A's to A-'s in courses that did not adhere to the limit. In an interview later that month, Claybaugh backtracked and said the enforcement was still a proposal.

The FAS-SEAS Senate's resolution considered how grades are a "significant" source of stress for student wellbeing, recognizing that changes in grading policies could be harmful by increasing competition, diminishing collaboration and adding risks to academic exploration.



Kimberly Angeles / Photography Editor
The Faculty of Arts and Sciences and School of Engineering and Applied Sciences Senate passed a resolution that seeks to reduce harm to students and faculty.

That stress has been "found to be particularly harmful for students who were racially or socioeconomically marginalized," the resolution says.

"Any policy designed to reduce grade inflation should be implemented only alongside measures that limit its impact on student health and welfare, especially during the transition period," it reads.

David Post, the deputy chair of the FAS-SEAS Senate, also said in the press release that instructional faculty, whose contracts often depend on student evaluations, need protection from changes to grading policies and potentially negative effects on student evaluations. The resolution recommended that those protections be put in place before any new grading policy is implemented.

Instead of endorsing a uniform grading distribution, the FAS-SEAS Senate's resolution calls on the Committee on Teaching, Learning and Advising to follow the informational purpose of grades through reporting course and department grade distributions and decoupling Latin honors and awards from raw GPA thresholds.

The resolution also recommends a common grading framework across Yale College, to "clarify collective academic standards and determine grade distributions" while simultaneously preserving faculty authority over individual courses.

"Faculty must retain final authority over grading policy in their courses," the resolution says. "At the same time, a common framework approved by the faculty should be implemented consistently across all departments and divisions."

Finally, the Senate called for increased student and faculty consultation throughout these policy developments. The Student Affairs Committee of the FAS-SEAS Senate, which drafted the resolution, focuses on policies concerning academic support for undergraduate and graduate students.

Yale College's Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Advising, convened by Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis and University President Maurie McInnis, is chaired by economics professor and former University provost Benjamin Polak. The committee, composed of 19 members, includes faculty, administrators and representatives from the Yale College Council.

Farina emphasized that Lewis is "dedicated to addressing grade compression in a collaborative manner that incorporates faculty input" and praised Polak for his efforts in leading the committee.

The next FAS-SEAS Senate meeting is scheduled for Oct. 15 in Dow Hall.

Contact **JOLYNDA WANG** *at jolynda.wang@yale.edu and* **HAILEY YOUNG** *at hailey.young@yale.edu.*

Proposed statement slams dean's decision-making

COUNCIL FROM PAGE 1

said enhanced student stress.

Silliman senator Michael Canudas '28 raised concerns during the Sunday meeting that the statement was not fair to Lewis and did not accurately assess his term thus far as dean.

"I'm just a little bit concerned that we're sort of cherrypicking the negatives," Canudas said. "I just think we're pinning a lot on Dean Lewis here."

Lewis did not immediately respond to the News' request for comment.

As of Sunday evening, the statement was sponsored by Yale First-Generation and/or Low-Income Advocacy Movement, Yale QuestBridge Scholars Network, Rural Students Alliance at Yale and Mecha de Yale — a student organization dedicated to political activism for the Latinx population and other underrepresented communities, according to its website.

"With so many Latine students identifying as FGLI, the continuous and staggering budget cuts have disproportionately impacted us," Mecha de Yale co-moderator Lineth Miramontes '28, wrote in an email to the News, referring to first-generation, low-income students. "We will not stand for Dean Lewis's policies or rhetoric that continue to disregard and dehumanize Latine students at Yale."

Ximena Solorzano Castillo '28, a YCC senator and co-president of Yale First-Generation and/or Low-Income Advocacy Movement, echoed this critique in a testimony given through Zoom at the YCC meeting. Solorzano Castillo is also a former head photography editor for the News.

"Various FGLI first-years have felt like they were not properly supported due to the lack of advising as their course registration was moved to during the summer and not when they first came onto campus," Solorzano Castillo said. "They felt like they didn't have the adequate resources or the connections to make a good schedule that would best accommodate their transition onto campus."

The statement claims that Lewis has not fulfilled his promise to strengthen the residential college system, and instead has centralized key responsibilities that were once under individual colleges' jurisdiction.

It also criticized Lewis' communication style, alleging that the dean confirmed summer storage support would cease only six weeks after telling YCC senators that student support programs would not receive any more major cuts. Lewis said earlier this year that he had forgotten about the cuts when meeting with student leaders.

"Dean Lewis has abandoned the mantle of leadership, leaving the Yale College community without clear guidance or transparency," the statement reads.

The senate voted to table the public statement because some senators wanted additional time to review the language of the document and better understand the "purview of decision making" in the Yale College administration, Kyler Parker '29, speaker of the YCC Senate, wrote to the News.

On Sunday, Parker, who suggested the senate vote on the statement anonymously, acknowledged that some senators might fear that approving the statement would strain their working relationship with Lewis, who is attending the YCC Senate meeting on Oct. 11.

"As Michelle and I meet with Dean Lewis multiple times a month, email him multiple times a week, I don't think that this would negatively impair our relationship to the point where he's going to not work with us," YCC President Alex William Chen '28 said during the meeting. "I think it is very fair for all senators to vote their conscience."

Chen added that he had given Lewis a "heads up" that the statement was coming.

The Yale College Council was established in 1972.

Jolynda Wang contributed reporting.

Contact **SARAH RIVAS** *at sarah.rivas@yale.edu.*



Olivia Woo / Contributing Photographer
The Yale College Council considered issuing a public statement that urged top administrators not to reappoint Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis.

Yale Corporation gathered for first of four meetings

TRUSTEES FROM PAGE 1

ly-elected alumni fellow Mariko Silver '99 said.

Saturday morning's meetings were held in the Greenberg Conference Center, near the Yale Divinity School. In past years, the trustees met in the Corporation Room at Woodbridge Hall. When asked in March why the Corporation no longer meets in Woodbridge Hall, Peart wrote that the Corporation now uses meeting spaces with more room and better technology.

This year, the board of trustees are scheduled to meet on campus four times — a decrease from the five on-campus meetings in previous years.

Student organizations scheduled protests to coincide with the Corporation's September visit to campus, but postponed the demonstration to Oct. 2 due to the weekend's forecasted nor'easter. The storm caused flooding in parts of Connecticut.

On Saturday morning, the three new trustees, Derek Chang '89, Phillipe Costeletos '87 and Silver, as well as Maryana Iskander GRD '03, met with Graduate and Professional Student Senate President Raekwon Fuller DRA '27 and Graduate Student Assembly Chair Anushka Potdar GRD '30.



Ximena Solorzano / Photography Editor
In the Yale Corporation's first in-person meeting of the academic year, trustees met with faculty and student representatives and also spoke with international students.

"They hear a lot from undergrads, they say, and know more about undergrad life," Fuller said outside the conference center on Saturday. "They want to hear more about the graduate and professional student experience."

Topics that Fuller and Potdar brought up in the "listening session" included discrepancies in career development opportunities among the graduate and professional schools, accessibility and safety concerns, differences in opportunities between undergraduate and graduate students and financial transparency about the cost of attending graduate school.

Fuller said that the trustees met with international students on Friday, where they discussed the Office of International Students and Scholars along with "new visa changes and how international students feel."

Yale's ongoing negotiations with the Trump administration about the School of Medicine's admissions practices "did not come up in this meeting," Fuller said. The trustees brought up the reduced numbers of doctoral candidates, according to Fuller and Potdar.

Fuller described the four trustees in the meeting as "very receptive."

"They were clearly very curious to learn more. They didn't know some things about our graduate school experience," Potdar said.

The meeting comes as trustees have faced scrutiny, from a faculty committee and students across campus, over their private agenda.

According to a Saturday Instagram post from the Endowment Justice Collective — which advocates for ethical investment practices — banners reading "Shared Governance Now," "Trustees You Can't Hide" and "Fight Back Don't Settle" hung on buildings across campus. The post's caption read, "Good morning and welcome to campus, Yale Board of Trustees! We came across some notes left for you."

The Committee on Trust in Higher Education included a recommendation in their April report calling on the University to "Build trust with the trustees."

The Trust Committee called for Yale's faculty to appoint liaisons to the trustees to provide "academic perspective to trustee deliberations" and report back to the wider community. It also called on the corporation to maintain scholars and academic leaders as members.

Many of the trustees have backgrounds in finance or business. Thomas, an alumni fellow on the board, is currently a professor at Harvard University and served as president of Morehouse College.

At their meeting last April, trustees declined to comment on specific recommendations from the trust report. Marta Tellado GRD '02, the senior trustee, wrote in a statement provided through Yale's central communications office in April that she appreciates the committee's work, but did not directly respond to questions about their calls to build trust with the board.

When approached before their Saturday meetings, a few trustees spoke briefly to the News.

"This is the beginning of the year so we talk about the budget," Tellado said. "We have so much committee business to do that we talk about anything that is related to our job as the Yale Corporation."

When asked what the board would be discussing, trustee Felicia Norwood LAW '89 answered, "all the things we always discuss. The kinds of things that keep Yale at the forefront and continue to make us better."

"We always want to make Yale a world class institution, and I think all the conversations around how we do that is what matters most," she said. Norwood said the trustees would be "certainly trying to make sure we understand the things that impact all of you."

Chang said the trustees would be discussing "normal board matters."

John Barden, Vice President for Information Technology and Campus Services, entered the Greenberg Conference Center around 10:30 a.m. University Provost Scott Strobel was also seen walking into the building earlier that morning.

The Corporation's next on-campus meeting will take place on Dec. 12.

Contact **ARIA LYNN-SKOV** *at aria.lynn-skov@yale.edu* **SARA AGRAWAL** *at sara.agrawal@yale.edu and* **LEO NYBERG** *at leo.nyberg@yale.edu.*