SATIRE

Yale's pledge task hall of fame

// BY LEAH SKINNER

The leaves are falling. The temperatures are dropping. And the newest pledges of Yale's top house are painting themselves pink and standing in the middle of Cross Campus.

Pledge season is here for some of Yale's frats and other social organizations. And as much as the new pledges love participating, getting an external view is even better. There really is nothing better than walking your parents around campus on Family Weekend and having to tell them "Oh, it's nothing, just a pledge" when they see a blindfolded person getting bathed in flour.

There is no lack of creativity in pledge tasks at Yale. But which tasks are cemented in the Pledge Hall of Fame? These are my favorite alleged, fictional stories, because as any Yale frat brother will tell you: hazing isn't real.

Beer Mile Pledge:

This perfectly sums up the "work hard, play hard" vibes of Yale. Teaching a pledge how to maximize their time is so kind. Why choose between an evening of drinking or hitting the gym when you just combine it for max productivity? Feel free to go **ahead** and add "time management" to your skills on LinkedIn.

Instagram Pledge:

Nothing is more horrific to the Yale Cool Girl™ than forcing her to forgo her perfectly curated Yinsta. Years of unarchiving at the perfect time, buying a $1,500 Canon G7X, and perfecting the posed candid photos, all ruined by a story with the worst Snapchat filter possible and really, really tacky hashtags. There is no better test of a potential sister's loyalty to your organization than asking her to sacrifice her personal brand.

13 Bananas "Pledge":

When my friend first told me about this, no one in the room knew what she was talking about. I have no clue if this is a pledge thing or if one kid just did it on his own, but allegedly, he sat down in class and ate 13 bananas. Either way, respect to him. It's definitely slim pickings when it comes to fruit options in the dining halls.

Weather Pledge:

True brotherhood: waking up at 6 a.m. every morning to deliver the weather report to your chapter. New Haven weather has been unpredictable as of late. It's so thoughtful to tell your brothers what to expect for the day, so that they don't unexpectedly get hit with rain on their trek e-scooting to Kline Tower.

Women's Rights Pledge:

Seeing a pledge walk around Cross Campus with a bulky "End Women's Suffering" sign was a big win for Yale women and women across the world — a bigger win than 6'5 men who read feminist literature in public. I, too, hate period cramps and want to end all women's suffering. Shoutout to feminism's strongest ally.

#Pledgetok Pledge:

Oh, that guy who refuses to dance with you? Whenever he's pledging, he becomes a modern Charli D'Amelio. But don't stress too much. Feel free to spend hours scrolling on #PledgeTok like the rest of us.

Pledge tasks are bizarre. Pledge tasks are embarrassing. But, perhaps more importantly, pledge tasks are entertaining. Watching a guy I know from my statistics lecture raise his hand and chant Latin at the professor has been an absolute privilege. To the social orgs and frats, thank you so much for giving us a front row seat.

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ILLUSTRATION BY MAIA WILSON

COLUMN

No extensions allowed: Introducing my senior bucket list

// BY ESMERALDA VASQUEZ-FERNANDEZ



ILLUSTRATION BY JOYCE KIM

Years of sacrifices, laughs and extensions have been building up for the inevitable cap and gown walk. Friends and family anticipate cheering you on. Students trade their student ID for a corporate office one. They swap their beat-up frat shoes for pristine loafers. The days of having youthful free time are over — not that there was any time to begin with. But in between the few blank spaces amongst the packed GCal entries is the perfect opportunity to complete a senior bucket list: the one assignment you can't get an extension on.

Brainstorming experiences that I want to have before the end of the year has been challenging. Who knew that it would be harder to come up with fun things to do than complete my already daunting Canvas to-do list?

There's something about the complete freedom that makes it difficult. So instead of killing the planet by using ChatGPT or Claude to help me, I decided to ask other senior Yalies what's on their bucket lists.

Tybee Feiler '27 has compiled a very nice list that includes the following bullet points: "apple picking, New York City trip with friends, starting a tradition, attending a formal at Harvest and going to The Well."

One of Gabriel Haley's '27 bucket list items includes "holding a handstand for 10 seconds."

I think the last time I did a handstand was in Europe this summer and I almost fell face-first, so maybe I can aim for a two-second one instead and work my way up to Gabriel's level.

There's a wide range of list ideas and activities to complete. There is the naked run that happens in the library and a plethora of guest speaker events that are "once in a lifetime" experiences.

The hardest part of graduation for me isn't about my post-graduate prospects. Maybe corporate life should be a senior's primary concern, but for now, I care more about having to part ways with the people I've come to know and love. I find myself soaking up every moment of studying in the Silliman College movie theater room and late night car drives, all too aware that this won't last forever.

So instead of creating my own separate bucket list, I decided to make one that incorporated things my friends want to do, too. I did, however, make a list of personal habits to incorporate into my life, like waking up early and limiting my usage of the word "like."

We've come up with an extended list: Chili's night, YSO shows, running a 5k, Feb Club, road trip to Maine. Personally, I really want to try every buttery, study in every library and sit in every courtyard. I also want to explore more of New Haven's thrift stores and coffee shops, not just the ones less than a ten-minute walk away from campus.

Senior year is stressful. There is no dean's extension on the time we have left. I want to make the most out of the remaining time I have with the people I care about and the opportunities I come across. I'm starting this column because making a bucket list is the best first step. I invite you to join me on my journey through the Yale I haven't yet discovered.

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WEEKEND RECOMMENDS:

CHUGGING APPLE CIDER