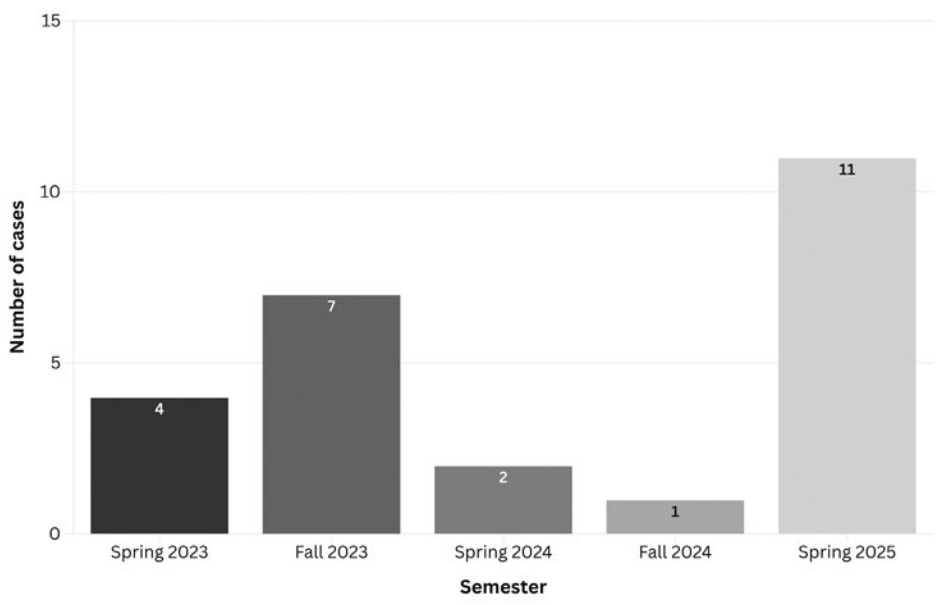
FROM THE FRONT

"The invariable mark of wisdom is to see the miraculous in the common."
RALPH WALDO EMERSON AMERICAN PHILOSOPHER



Pranitha Chillara / Staff Reporter
A review of 657 published disciplinary cases seen by the Yale College Executive Committee between fall 2019 and spring 2025 reveals shifts in the committee's caseload, the class years involved and the charges students faced.

ChatGPT charges began in 2023

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cent of the semester's caseload. However, academic integrity violations represented the largest share of cases in spring 2025, comprising 62.3 percent of the semester's caseload.

Artificial intelligence

Charges explicitly involving ChatGPT or generative artificial intelligence first appeared in ExComm's case summaries in spring 2023, when four cases of such use were reported. That number increased to seven in fall 2023 before declining to two in spring 2024 and one in fall 2024.

However, by spring 2025, that number had risen to 11, the highest recorded in a single semester. AI-related allegations accounted for approximately one in five of the 53 ExComm cases reported that spring. And across all five semesters in which such cases appeared, 25 charges were explicitly identified as relating to ChatGPT or generative AI.

Varied outcomes

The vast majority of ExComm cases ended in findings of responsibility. Of the 657 cases, 566, approximately 86.1 percent, resulted in students being found responsible for at least one charge. Only 43 cases ended in findings of not being responsible, or approximately 6.5 percent, and in 48 cases, or approximately 7.3 percent of cases, all charges were withdrawn.

Reprimands were the most common disciplinary consequence, issued in 393 cases, or approximately 59.8 percent of total cases. Probation was issued in 143 cases, or 21.8 percent of cases, followed by suspension in 27 cases and expulsion in just three. No punishment was issued in 91 cases, or approximately 13.9 percent of cases, including those in which students were found not responsible or all charges were withdrawn.

The distribution of punishments also differed across semesters. Spring 2021 recorded 36 probation cases, accounting for nearly 44 percent of all cases that semester. Expulsions appeared only in fall 2021 and fall 2023.

Punishments by offense category

Although reprimands were the most frequent disciplinary consequence across most offense categories, more serious punishments were disproportionately associated with academic integrity cases.

Among the 432 academic integrity cases, 214 resulted in reprimands and 123 in probation. Another 20 led to suspensions and two to expulsions.

Access and authority cases were more likely to end in reprimands. Of the 159 cases in this category, 141 cases, approximately 88.7 percent, resulted in reprimands, compared with just 12 cases in probation and three in suspension. No expulsions were recorded as resulting from charges in this category.

Caseload and class year

More disciplinary cases were reported in the spring semester than the fall semester during every academic year analyzed. Across the six-year period, spring semesters accounted for 405 cases, compared with 252 in fall semesters.

Spring 2020 recorded the highest caseload, with 85 cases, followed by spring 2021 and spring 2023, which each recorded 82. Fall 2022 recorded just 15 cases, the fewest in the six-year period.

The four class years were relatively evenly represented across the six-year period, with a difference of just 32 cases between the highest and lowest totals. Juniors appeared in the most ExComm cases overall, accounting for 182 of the 657 cases analyzed, or approximately 27.7 percent of the total. Sophomores followed with 169 cases, or approximately 25.7 percent, while seniors accounted for 156 cases, or 23.7 percent, and first years for 150 cases, or 22.8 percent.

In more recent academic years, seniors represented a particularly large share of cases. They accounted for more than half of ExComm cases in fall 2024 — 20 of 37 total — and 25 of 53 total cases in spring 2025. In contrast, just one case involving a senior was included in the fall 2023 case summaries.

The Executive Committee began handling academic and disciplinary matters in 1926, according to the University website.

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Plaintiffs say citizens, free speech at risk

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The plaintiffs in the case filed Monday are represented by attorneys from the Law School's Media Freedom and Information Access Clinic and a First Amendment institute at Columbia University.

Politico, MS NOW and CNN filed a separate lawsuit against Trump in September and secured an extended injunction against the ban earlier this month. The injunction allows outlets to cover the White House until a court makes a final ruling, although their reporters continue to face restrictions when reporting from Air Force One and travelling with the president.

According to the Monday complaint, Roth — who teaches a course at the Law School and Jackson School of Global Affairs — frequently relies on reporting for columns he writes in The Guardian and assigns White House reporting in his courses.

"All of the Plaintiffs rely on the White House press corps for independent reporting about the president and his administration, and all of them use that reporting in a variety of ways in their scholarship, teaching, journalism, or advocacy," the complaint reads.

The federal government has argued that Politico, MS NOW, CNN and several other outlets spread disinformation about and paint an overwhelmingly negative picture of the Trump administration's policies. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Gage said that after the Trump administration announced the media ban, the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University reached out to her about suing the administration as the institute considered how to respond.

"I'm really weighing in from the vantage point of a scholar and a historian, as well as a citizen who relies on accurate reporting that has not been put through an ideological filter, or at least not just one ideological filter," Gage said. "The people who are affected down the line from this are the American public and scholars and commentators and really anyone who wants to understand what's going on in the federal government."

In April, Gage co-authored a Yale report on trust in higher education, which drew positive responses nationwide. The Trump administration's education secretary, Linda McMahon, praised the Committee on Trust in Higher Education's recommendations in a congressional hearing and open letter to American universities.

Gage said she was "not too worried" about whether McMahon and the administration will stop praising her report because she is suing Trump.

Second lady Usha Vance '07 LAW '13 participated in the Media Freedom and Information Access Clinic while attending Yale Law School.

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Kailyn Huynh / Contributing Photographer
History professor Beverly Gage and Law School and Jackson School fellow Kenneth Roth joined a coalition of six plaintiffs suing President Donald Trump and top administration officials to block a ban of media outlets that have published stories critical of the president.

Reduction let school keep tuition aid under Trump tax

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continuing to provide full-tuition scholarships and increase stipend support for all YDS students who have a demonstrated financial need."

While the school matriculated 128 students for the 2024-25 school year, it enrolled 113 new students last fall and 112 new students this fall. The total student population, at 311 in the 2024-25 academic year, fell to 302 and 285 in the 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years, respectively.

"Following the 8% endowment tax which took effect this July, YDS limited the number of accepted students in the 2026-27 school year in order to ensure that the school remains financially accessible," a September article on the Divinity School's website reads.

President Donald Trump signed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act into law in July 2025, increasing the federal tax on Yale's endowment income from 1.4 percent to 8 percent. As a result, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences is decreasing enrollment by 5 percent in STEM programs and 13 percent in humanities and social sciences programs.

Some of Yale's schools that rely more on the University's endowment returns have faced increased pressure on their budgets compared to schools with other sources of funding.

The Divinity School, one of Yale's 13 professional schools, receives 89 percent of its income from the endowment, according to the 2027 budget book. In contrast, endowment returns account for 6.6 percent of income for the School of Medicine — which relies heavily on grant and contract revenue.

Divinity School students interviewed by the News expressed dismay that the school has to reduce enrollment due to the government increasing Yale's endowment tax. However, they also expressed gratitude that the school upholds its commitment to remain tuition-free for students with demonstrated financial need.

"I believe that YDS made the right decision by maintaining full-tuition scholarships," Drake Smith DIV '27 wrote in an email to the News. "The Divinity School has set the standard of expanding access to first-rate theological education."

The Divinity School is tuition free to all students who qualify for need-based financial aid. According to the school's official website, 95 percent of its students qualify for full-tuition scholarships, while most students also receive living expense stipends.

Smith also wrote that the enrollment cuts reflect the federal government's attempts to restrict higher education.

"Truthfully, my reaction had more to do with the spiteful nature in which the endowment tax was imposed by an ignorant and sloppy federal government hellbent on eroding trust in higher-education," Smith wrote.

Benedict Reilly DIV '27 wrote in an email to the News that it is important for the Divinity School to uphold its existing commitment to providing full-tuition scholarships for students with demonstrated needs.

"Regressing in the financial aid offerings would not have been a viable pathway for serving the Church and the world in the way the Divinity School aspires to do so," he wrote. "Students increasingly come from non-denominational or academic backgrounds and do not have the financial support of a diocese or sponsoring congregation, as was more common in the past."

Nora Elisabet Kalkman DIV '27 also wrote in an email to the News that she is grateful the school chose to prioritize financial support for students when facing financial pressure.

"For many considering a future in nonprofits and religious spaces, these scholarships have enabled them to attend YDS," she wrote.

For Kate DiTullio DIV '28, reducing financial aid would have imposed a greater harm on student culture at the Divinity School than the enrollment cut.

"I would guess it was a hard decision, and I think it probably was the right decision," DiTullio said.

DiTullio added that the effect of the enrollment cut remains to be felt by students.

"I have not heard a lot of people talking about it," she said.

Kalkman and Reilly also praised the school leadership's transparency in communicating the potential effect of the endowment tax hike to students. According to Reilly, the school's dean Greg Sterling explained how the endowment tax hike could potentially affect the Divinity School in a town hall in December 2025.

"This transparent and honest communication was very meaningful to our student community," Kalkman wrote. "It brought us together in a time of uncertainty, demonstrated how it had also emotionally impacted administration, and allowed us to understand why these decisions were being made."

For the 2026-27 academic year, tuition at the Divinity School is $31,192, according to the school's official website.

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Alex Hong / Photography Editor
The school enrolled fewer students in the two most recent cycles to guarantee tuition aid for students with financial need. Students told the News they appreciate the Divinity School's transparency and commitment to financial aid amid budgetary pressure.