FROM THE FRONT

"Spring is the time of plans and projects."
LEO TOLSTOY ANNA KARENINA

Report examines Jewish presence at elite colleges

ENROLLMENT FROM PAGE 1

Ashkenazy said the trend of the declining Jewish population was more striking at Yale than at Harvard, because Yale has increased the size of its first-year class in the past decade — most notably with the opening of two new residential colleges in 2017 — but the Jewish population has still shrunk, according to the data Ashkenazy and his team analyzed.

Noting that a vast majority of American Jews are white, Ashkenazy said that the report's authors wanted to figure out if the decline in Jewish students' proportion correlated with a decline in the percentage of white non-Jewish students amid efforts to increase the representation of students of color.

"Admissions priorities that have come forward in the last twenty years, and when you look at each one and you compare them to the demographics of the Jewish population you would logically assume that pursuing those policies would lead to a sharp decline in the Jewish community on campus," Ashkenazy said, describing the hypothesis of the report's authors.

But they found that the proportion of Jewish students declined more than that of white non-Jewish students — or, precisely, white students minus Jewish ones — indicating that the declining Jewish population was not a byproduct of efforts to increase racial diversity.

"It really is designed to put the larger question in the laps of places like Harvard and Yale, and say, 'Listen, we don't understand why the numbers turned out like this. Maybe you can explain it,'" Ashkenazy said.

Yale leaders said it was important to take the numbers showing a decline in Jewish enrollment with a grain of salt.

Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis said in a Wednesday interview with the News that he had not seen the Harvard report and that Yale has a "thriving" Jewish community.

"I think that would be very hard to measure," he said in a Wednesday interview with the News, referring to the conclusion that the undergraduate Jewish population had declined. "So many students — like, I'm half Jewish — a lot of people might consider themselves Jewish but not answer the question in a particular way."

University Chaplain Maytal Saltiel, who arrived at Yale in 2013 and in 2024 became the first Jew to hold her current position, wrote in an email to the News that, in her personal experience at Yale, she has noticed increasing levels of participation from Jewish students in Chaplain's Office programs, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Many of our students are part of multiple religious communities and may come from multi-religious households," Saltiel wrote. "Religious identification in college is often fluid, as some students may be exploring who they are and what values they hold most dear."

Yale School of Medicine professor Evan Morris, the founder of the Yale Forum for Jewish Faculty and Friends, told the News he was "alarmed" by the report and would like to see administrators address declining Jewish enrollment "head on."

"This begs a very serious question: How the heck can it happen? Particularly this episode at Yale, where overall enrollment goes up but Jews go down," Morris said in an interview. "That just seems quite striking and, to the naive guy that I am, it makes me wonder, how could this possibly happen without intentionality?"

Yale spokesperson Karen Peart wrote in an email to the News that "information on students' religious affiliation and ethnic identity is not collected or considered in the university's admissions process." She touted Yale's Jewish student organizations, including the Slifka Center for Jewish Life and Chabad at Yale.

Peart added that Yale "has also established a standing advisory committee on Jewish student life" and "developed education programming on antisemitism and the experience of Jewish students on campus."

Jewish leaders on campus said the community is strong and were not overly concerned about the figures.

Uri Cohen, the executive director of the Slifka Center, wrote in a statement to the News that, because of Slifka's "strong working relationship" with the admissions office, the Jewish population at Yale has remained "generally consistent" over the past eight years, when he has been on campus.

"Every year, I ask first-year students why they chose Yale," Cohen wrote. "Many of them talk about the vibrancy of the Jewish community at Yale via Slifka as a big part of their decision-making."

"At a time when hatred of Jews is intensifying across our country, it is imperative for every institution, including universities, to ensure that Jews are welcome and safe," Cohen wrote.

Zach Pan '27 and Yossi Moff '27, the co-presidents of the Slifka Center's Hillel Student Board, wrote in a joint statement to the News that "Yale's Jewish community is thriving at Slifka," having broken attendance records at events in the last year.

The Chaplain's Office has public data on religious demographics at Yale dating back to the 1930s.

Olivia Woo contributed reporting.

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Martin Peralta / Staff Photographer
A report released by the Harvard Jewish Alumni Alliance pointed to a decline in Jewish enrollment at Yale but suggested that it could not be attributed to racial diversity efforts. Yale Jewish leaders said the religious community is flourishing.

Athletic director's contract ends soon

LETTER FROM PAGE 1

sible" in the letter quoted by Fox News, and went on to say that she had "created a toxic environment within the department where she is insulated by a cadre of administrators whose main task seems to be silencing any dissent."

The letter might come as a shock to Yale men's hockey fans who attended this season's home opener against Quinnipiac, where Chun welcomed Allain and his family onto the ice for a pregame ceremony to honor his contributions to the historic program.

The letter prompted a range of reactions from Yale alumni and athletics supporters, with some expressing support for Chun and others echoing concerns raised in Allain's letter.

Jack Ford '72, a Yale football alumnus and ESPN football analyst and broadcaster, said he has had positive experiences working with Chun through his involvement in Yale Athletics and Ivy League events.

"I've chaired the George H. W. Bush Lifetime of Leadership selection committees for many years and I've always found Vicky absolutely accessible, engaged, innovative, thoughtful and supportive of all of our efforts. And I would offer the same assessment of the many staff members I've worked with during her tenure," Ford wrote in an email to the News.

Richard Kent, a sports attorney and longtime Yale Athletics supporter who covers Ivy League men's basketball for Ivy Hoops and occasionally appears as a commentator on Yale's WYBC sports radio, offered a different perspective.

"I have heard a bevy of stories from former employees which are quite consistent with what Keith said," Kent wrote in an email to the News.

When asked for her reaction to the Fox News article, Barbara Miller '72, who has been a longtime Yale men's and women's hockey fan and regularly attends the games, wrote to the News that she noticed Chun's decision not to deliver the keynote speech at a 2022 ceremony commemorating 50 years of women's varsity sports at Yale.

Miller added that "she left that task to a subordinate."

Asher Boiskin contributed reporting.

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Tim Tai
In a letter reported by Fox News, former men's hockey coach Keith Allain criticized Athletic Director Vicky Chun's leadership.

At SOM, Fed's Lisa Cook discusses financial stability

COOK FROM PAGE 1

management professor Andrew Metrick '89, wrote in the email to the News that the program's interest in inviting Cook was primarily academic, relating to her role as the chair of the Federal Reserve Board's Committee on Financial Stability.

"Governor Cook chairs the financial stability committee at the Federal Reserve Board. And we are the 'Yale Program on Financial Stability,'" Metrick wrote. "So she is a very important person in our field and we have been trying to arrange this visit for a long time."

During the event, Cook did not address her ongoing lawsuit against Trump. Instead, she framed her talk as an opportunity for her to "reflect upon" her "four years of careful attention" to the topic of financial security. She began by recounting her long-standing interest in this topic, which she connected to her studies of the Russian banking system and her later career as an economist at the Council of Economic Advisers.

Cook discussed the Financial Security Report, a semiannual report issued by the Federal Reserve Board that presents its evaluation of the resilience of the U.S. financial sector. For Cook, the report is "a platform that policymakers build upon to develop their own views about the system's overall resilience rather than expressing a centralized view."

"The value in the FSR lies in the consistent attention to, and updating of, the underlying indicators of both the resilience and evolution of the financial system," Cook said.

Cook further discussed scenario analysis, a mechanism for assessing financial stability by "analyzing the implications of a sequence of shocks" on the financial system. To illustrate the workings of this mechanism, Cook raised a hypothetical situation: "What if AI disappoints?"

"Although tech booms and periods of technological progress have occurred in the past, it is difficult to know if any compares to the current situation," Cook said. Scenario analysis, she added, "helps us break free of the well-known human tendency to believe that tomorrow will be like today."

Cook concluded her talk by sharing her thoughts on how policymaking can contribute to financial stability. She stressed the importance of getting "high quality data" to support assessments of financial stability, cultivating the resilience of a highly interconnected, multiparty financial system and staying open to positive reforms.

"I hope I've made clear that while I and the Fed have learned much in recent years, financial stability is an exercise in continual study and improvement," Cook said. "Similarly, it is important to keep you, and the public more generally, informed of this work."

June Rhee, a senior editor for the Yale Program on Financial Stability, wrote in an email to the News that Cook's double role as an economist and policymaker makes her a particularly valuable speaker to the Yale community.

"Hopefully, hearing from the current national policymaker, Yale students, who are headed into the world and whose work inevitably will be influenced by the global economy, will gain meaningful insight into policy-making by central banks." Rhee wrote. "Maybe some will be convinced to join the policy making world."

Cook's speech was followed by a question-and-answer session with Metrick. According to Metrick, the questions were "curated" from questions posed by audience members, who could submit questions for Cook when registering for the event.

During the session, Cook talked about the "lessons" she learned through studying in 1990s Russia that are applicable to the current U.S. financial system, as well as the increasing involvement of AI in financial activities.

When asked for her thoughts on how AI would impact the job market faced by newly graduating Yale students, Cook exhibited a neutral attitude.

"It can be the biggest labor market transition that we've seen in generations," Cook said, referring to the impact of AI on the job market. She claimed herself to be "right in the middle" of the divide between pessimism and optimism towards AI's impact on the labor market.

A Federal Reserve Board spokesperson said Cook was unavailable for an interview with the News.

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