Mid-Year Report 2013

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**Presidential Search**

*Presidential Search Report*: As the Presidential Search Committee evaluated candidates to replace University President Richard Levin, the YCC gathered student opinion and identified the most contentious issues to be addressed. The YCC sent a campus-wide survey completed by 620 undergraduates. Incorporating both quantitative and qualitative responses, the 61-page YCC Presidential Search Report was completed and sent to the Presidential Search Committee on October 16, 2012. In an official letter, Search Committee Chairman and Yale Corporation Trustee Chip Goodyear thanked the YCC for the report, which he called “essential reading for the next President of Yale.”

*Open Forum with Presidents Levin and Salovey*: The committee worked on organizing an Open Forum with President Richard Levin. The Open Forum was to be on November 8, 2012. President Levin regretfully had to cancel because of that day’s announcement that Provost Peter Salovey would be Yale’s next president. The YCC has rescheduled the forum, now with President-elect Salovey, to be on Monday, February 25 at 7:00PM to 8:00PM in Sudler Hall.

**Dining**

*Fall, Thanksgiving and Winter Break Meals*: The YCC worked with Yale Dining to further extend dining services across the academic calendar. All residential college dining halls were open for the newly created Fall Break. For the Monday to Wednesday of Thanksgiving break, the Pierson and Calhoun dining halls were opened (twice as many as the previous year). For Winter break, there was a new option to buy meal swipes to eat in the Morse-Stiles dining hall during the last five days of winter break. The YCC has encouraged this expansion over the long term, and has also advocated for the extension of deadlines to buy meal swipes. This optional Morse-Stiles dining hall service will also be available for Spring Break.

*Salad Bar Improvements*: The YCC engaged Yale Dining to redesign Yale’s salad bars based on student feedback. On October 2, 2012 the YCC sent out a survey for students in which students chose their favorite salad dressings, recommended toppings, and voted in favor of having one low fat dressing. These results were compiled into a 6-page Salad Bar Report, based on which Yale Dining redesigned its salad bar. Starting December 9, 2012, all salad bars offered Balsamic, Raspberry, Caesar and low-fat Ranch dressing, in addition to new serving containers and toppings selected by students.

*Dining Staff Thank You Banners*: On November 11, 2012, the YCC had students sign 3x8 foot “Thank You” banners for the dining hall staff for their years of service and their coming to work the previous week despite Hurricane Sandy. The banners are on display in the different dining halls to show student appreciation for dining hall staff.
Technology

**App Challenge and Tech Month:** The YCC is bringing App Challenge into its 3rd year, awarding $1500 prize to the best student-made web app on March 1. It is also working with Yale BootUp and ITS to host the first ever YCC Tech Month in all February, with events including two hackathons open those with and without programming experience.

**Events Calendar:** The YCC has hired two student developers and engaged ITS to create an Events Calendar to centralize events-related information at Yale. The calendar will be released in the middle of Spring semester. The YCC is also advising ITS on a new student portal in the early stages of development, and organizing a focus group to test it at the start of the semester.

**Yalies on Rails, HackYale, and Computer Science at Yale:** The YCC is pleased to have sponsored [Yalies on Rails](https://www.yalealiesonrails.org), a program started by the Student Technology Collaborative (STC) Developer Program last semester for undergraduates to develop web applications. This is a new initiative from ITS to provide opportunities to get into tech and promote its culture on campus. The YCC also continued its partnership with HackYale to encourage applicable programming learning in the Yale community. We are currently working on a proposal for President-elect Salovey to introduce classes like this that would allow students to learn how to develop web apps for credit, under the Computer Science department.

Academics

**Academic Calendar Report:** Earlier this month, the YCC sent out a survey regarding the new academic calendar, which received over 1,340 responses. On January 23rd, the YCC Academics Committee met with administrators to present the survey results and propose calendar changes for future semesters. The YCC is also working with administrators on policy changes that will help alleviate the stress resulting from the shorter reading and exam periods this current spring term, including extending the mandatory paper deadline from the end of reading period to the end of exam period, and allowing student to postpone an exam that is scheduled for a morning slot right after an evening slot.

**Mandate Return of Finals:** All professors are required to return finals to students. In case final exams or papers are not returned, the YCC is soliciting student complaints. The YCC collected a list of about 150 professors who did not return finals to students. These professors’ names were sent to Dean Mary Miller.

**Credit/D/Fail Proposal:** The YCC submitted a proposal to postpone the deadline to convert a class from Credit/D/Fail to a letter grade to the last day before reading period. By the current deadline students in many classes receive feedback only on one assignment, and as a result don’t
have the opportunity to make an informed decision that reflects improvement in a course. Faculty and administrators of the Committee on Honors and Academic Standing are currently evaluating the proposal.

**Course Withdrawal Proposal:** The YCC submitted a proposal to postpone the deadline to withdraw from a class (without “W” appearing on a transcript) by two weeks. By the current deadline, not all students have received a grade from their midterm papers or exams, especially due to the new Fall break. The Dean’s Committee on Honors and Academic Standing is currently evaluating the proposal.

**Shopping Period and Course Registration:** For the first time, the YCC has engaged with the Dean’s Teaching, Learning & Advising Standing Committee, to provide student feedback on proposed changes to shopping period. The YCC has also defined an extensive list of new criteria to expand the information available for students on OCI, primarily pertaining to courses that require pre-registration or that are capped (e.g. class size, preference for which type of students, registration method, selection mechanism, waitlist and attendance policy). The YCC has advocated for the complete conversion of OCS to BlueBook, and a transition away from submitting schedules at the dean’s office, instead entirely enrolling for classes online. All proposals are currently under discussion with the relevant administrators and several are likely to be introduced in the 2013-2014 academic year.

**Financial Aid**

**Financial Aid Report:** The newly created YCC Financial Aid Committee is compiling a report for release this year on the state of financial aid at Yale. The committee is investigating the role of official forms and numerical data as well as circumstantial information in the determination of a financial aid package. The committee also discussed the role of the endowment with University administrators and clarified the contents of International Summer Awards.

**Financial Literacy Workshops:** In conjunction with the Financial Aid office, the YCC hopes to provide students with practical knowledge through clinics to be held later this year. The committee has identified three potential areas of financial literacy that undergraduates would like to learn more about: navigating the student loan process, opening a bank account/improving your credit score, and filing your taxes.

**Mental Health**

**Mental Health Resource Sheet:** The YCC has created a [resource sheet](#) with information on the full spectrum of mental health resources at Yale. It has sections for professional counseling resources, peer resources, and college resources and provides contact information for each.
Released during finals week of the first semester, the Resource Sheet was created to ensure that Yale students are aware of the complete list of resources at Yale.

**Mental Health Panel Series:** The YCC has begun working on a panel series for next semester that will involve Mental Health fellows from several colleges. Beginning with a panel on stress management in February, this initiative will both introduce students to their Mental Health fellows, as well as provide help dealing with things like stress management and talking to friends who may have a mental health problem. By facilitating panels and information sessions on these topics, the Mental Health committee hopes to reduce the stigma potentially associated with Yale Mental Health and offer students an important resource.

**Off-Campus Life**

**Committee on Off-Campus Life:** In light of the new off-campus party registration regulations set by the Yale College Dean’s Office, the YCC created the Committee on Off-Campus Life to investigate how these new rules were affecting off-campus organizations. This committee contacted fraternity, sorority, and a capella groups to ask if they wanted to address any concerns to the Yale Police Department and Yale College Dean's Office. These groups met with the Yale Police Department and Yale College Dean’s Office and were able to make their concerns known. If issues arise in the future, the committee will reconvene to address off-campus student life concerns to Yale administration.

**Center for International and Professional Experience (CIPE)**

**Study Abroad Credits:** The YCC is working with Director of CIPE Jane Edwards to increase the two-credit cap for students taking non-Yale study abroad programs. The committee is compiling a report on the extent to which students are deterred from studying abroad if they are ineligible for credit for having previously exceeded the two-credit cap. The committee will also consider what regions do not have Yale study abroad programs, and request that the two-credit cap not apply in cases when students have no choice but not to participate in a Yale program.

**Peer Counselor Program:** The YCC plans to review the Peer Counselor program from UCS to evaluate its effectiveness and ways to improve it. The committee is exploring offering a condensed version of the training UCS Peer Counselors to Freshman Counselors, to be taught by Peer Counselors. The committee is waiting to hear back from Dean Gentry in order to proceed.

**Science and Engineering Subcommittee (SES)**

**STEM Sibs:** A sub-committee of the YCC, SES launched “STEM Sibs,” an undergraduate-wide mentorship program, in late October. The committee designed the STEM Sib program to
help freshmen who are interested in science, engineering, technology, and mathematics majors by connecting them with upperclassmen in their prospective field(s) of study. These connections will help the freshmen select courses, guide their extracurricular pursuits, and advise them throughout their first year at Yale. Over 185 freshmen and 125 upperclassmen signed up to be part of the inaugural STEM Sibs Program. SES launched this program with an ice cream social in the Calhoun College dining hall and is planning to host future study breaks and STEM dinners in the coming months.

**Eli Adventures in Science and Engineering:** SES has planned its own Eli Adventures for the spring, featuring both on and off campus field trips to science and engineering-related locations. Trips will be free for all undergraduates and will take place throughout the semester. On-campus trips will include a trip to the Peabody Museum of Natural History, the Marsh Botanical Gardens, the Yale Power Plant, and the West Campus Genome Sequencing Facility.

**FALL BREAK**

**Fall Break Events:** In the first year of Yale’s new Fall Break, the YCC partnered with the Yale Dean's office to organize Fall Break events. These included an evening block party on High Street featuring food trucks, activity booths and student bands; discounted bus tickets to New York; late night bowling; a trip to Westfarms Mall; and discounted $5 movie tickets to Criterion cinemas. These activities were based on student recommendations from a YCC survey.

**Events:**

**Camp Yale Restaurant Deals:** The YCC partnered with Alpha Delta, The Anchor, Anna Liffey’s, Ashley’s Ice Cream, Box 63, Blue State Coffee, Claire’s, Froyo World, Geronimo’s, Insomnia Cookies, Istanbul Café, Oaxaca Kitchen, Seoul, Thai Pan Asian, Thali Too, and York Street Noodle to provide students with restaurant deals from August 22-27 (Camp Yale) when Yale dining halls were closed.

**YCC Elevate Your Resolutions New Year’s Party:** The YCC held a party attended by more than 700 students on January 17, 2013 at Elevate. The semi-formal event included an open-bar for those over 21.

**Fall Farm Tours:** The YCC partnered with Yale Dining to organize the annual fall farm tours. Each of four trips was attended by around 90 students in September and early October.

**What Would You Do for Wenzel?:** YCC partnered with Alpha Delta Pizza to give the student who submitted the most popular picture of them posing with a Wenzel a free wenzel per week for the rest of the school year.
**Harvard-Yale Tailgate:** The YCC hosted the Yale tailgate at this year’s Harvard-Yale game.

**Last Comic Standing:** YCC hosted the annual undergraduate comedian competition, attended by approximately 500 students. The winners performed in the Fall Show.

**Fall Show:** YCC hosted the annual Fall Comedy Show in Woolsey Hall, attended by approximately 1,000 students. Comedian John Mulaney performed after two student openers.

**Best Meal Ever:** As part of Food Week, YCC and Yale Dining collaborated to bring you a night of all your favorite dishes. Students voted on their top 3 choices for each part of the meal, and the winners were all served for dinner.

**Finals Week Deals:** YCC partnered with various New Haven businesses such as Blue State, Box 63, Ashley’s, Flavors, Campus Customs, Katalina’s Bakery, and Yorkshire to give students deals during finals week to brighten up their week!

**Undergraduate Organizations Committee:**

A subsidiary committee of the YCC, the Undergraduate Organizations Committee (UOC) is the newly restructured version of the Undergraduate Organizations and Funding Committee (UOFC). In making this shift, the objective was to emphasize the new role the UOC would be playing in the policies of undergraduate organizations this year. The UOC now plays a role in group registration and committees have been formed to tackle reported problems, including: room reservations, the banking system, and a revision of our bylaws and constitution. The UOC chair now also meets weekly with the Yale Business Office and Dean Meeske.

**Capital Equipment:** The UOC has expanded the capital equipment program this year. Over $5,000 has been dedicated to the purchase and organization of the system. It is the hope of the UOC that the purchase of more speakers and tables will decrease rental traffic and streamline the operation.

**Expanded Office Hours:** The UOC hosts office hours with liaisons every weekday at varied hours to ensure that the student body has access to this resource. UOC liaisons offer guidance on funding applications and the capital equipment process in person.

**Website Revision:** The UOC has re-organized the website this year in an attempt to add clarity to the process and make it easier for students to navigate.