Yale College Council  
*Council of Representatives Meeting*  
Sunday, February 1, 2014  
Meeting Thirteen

**Agenda Items**

1. Project Proposal: Student Mental Health Fellows  
2. Project Proposal: USC “Yale Treks” mentorship program  
3. Elections Committee Confirmations

**Attendance**

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Minutes

Please note that the minutes reflect the conversation held during the Council of Representatives meeting, but may not contain every comment and are not intended to reflect exact quotations. Comments in italics are notes to give context to the minutes. The layout of the minutes is the Presentation of the Issue, Presentation of the Discussion, and Recording of the Vote. Unless otherwise noted, the Presentation of the Issue is done by the person whose name is next to the heading for that issue. Comments by representatives or other attendees are preceded by their name (e.g. Jane: comment).

Student Mental Health Fellows

- Presentation [JOSEPH CORNETT]
  - Current Mental Health resources
    - Mental Health & Counseling
    - Walden Peer Counselors
    - Deans/Masters
    - Freshman Counselors – only for freshmen
  - Treatment gap
    - Mental Health Report (Summer 2013)
    - Walden: <4% used
    - MH&C: 30% used
    - NAMI: “40% of [college] students with diagnosable mental health conditions do not seek help”
  - Why don’t students get treated?
    - Campus culture & stigma of mental illness
    - Going to MH&C or Walden is a “drastic measure”
    - Unsure of how to navigate resources
    - Unsure of the value resources can provide
    - Negative perceptions of MH&C
    - Those who need treatment most are often the least likely to seek it
  - Mental Health Fellows Overview
    - Upperclassmen from each college (2 to 6)
    - Training:
      - Elements of FroCo training and Walden training, with additional MH&C training TBD
    - Purpose:
      - Knowledgeable friends/peers; friendly and approachable
      - Ambassadors for MH&C at the ground level
      - Guide students through process, advocate for them
      - Direct students to peer resources as needed, i.e. Walden
      - “Hands-off FroCos for upperclassmen”
      - Normalize mental health discussions

- Discussion
  - Josh M: How would it be structured, practically?
Joseph: It would be juniors and seniors chosen by the dean who fill this role for one year. They would be available most hours of the day (on call) and willing to meet one on one with students on an appointment basis.

Maia: It’s a lot like the CCE program. They would live in the residential colleges and are available for counseling throughout the year.

Ashley: Are students going to be assigned a counselor at the beginning of the year like a FroCo system, or would it be a group of counselors and you choose which one to reach out to?

Joseph: The latter seems more effective to me, because students will feel comfortable reaching out to someone they connect with more.

Adam: How can you improve approachability? For some, it’d be hard to approach a peer that they don’t know and talk about personal issues.

Joseph: That’s an unavoidable problem. We’d have office hours and put on events that will enable student to meet the counselors in person.

Tyler M: This really puts the initiative on the students to reach out. Will there be a mandatory at the beginning of the year to make sure everyone is aware of the program?

Joseph: The more you’re forced to interact with them at the beginning of the year, the better. We need to see how the deans react to the program.

Tyler B: I think there should be at least on mandatory interaction per year. That will reach a lot of individuals would feel uncomfortable making first contact with a stranger. Additionally, are these people being paid, and what does their actual week-to-week schedule look like?

Joseph: Ideally, they would be paid. How much they’re paid depends on other factors. Aside from that, their schedule will depend on weekly requests.

Azan: Is there a quality control mechanism?

Joseph: The competition will enable us to choose competent and dedicated people, just like for FroCos, etc.

Maia: We’re also not looking to hire psychiatrists. It’s more to break down stigmas of reaching out for mental health concerns, raise awareness about issues, and provide more information about resources.

Azan: If we’re using the FroCo model, should we just hire seniors?

Joseph: No, we should open up applications to all upperclassmen.

Jaime: Also, this seems like it’d be a job that you’ll get better at over time. I’d even say that it’d be beneficial to hire junior for a two year commitment to ensure that they will get more experienced over time.

Phan: Would these fellows receive training from Yale Mental Health, and have you reached out to them to ensure that there’s material for this?

Joseph: They would be trained by Mental Health, but we’re waiting for Council approval before reaching out.

Maddie: We also already have an established meeting with the groups because we have a formalized relationship with the Mental Health center.

**UCS “Yale Treks” mentorship program**

- Presentation [SAM KIM]
  - Origins of the program
- We lack a job shadowing program
- Based on student feedback and from Yale Ideas, students are interested in this program
  - It would be open to all Yale students, not just undergrads
  - It would be more focused than existing programs, ideally one to two days of shadowing

  o Scope of the program
    - Traditional/Competitive Approach
      - Shadow in most competitive fields and standard positions to allow an “in” into competitive industries?
      - Ex. Finance (Banker)
      - Medical (Doctor/Nurse)
      - Education (Teacher)
    - Alternative/“Hidden Gem” Approach
      - Shadow in competitive fields with alternative positions?
      - Ex. Finance (Financial Advisor)
      - Medical (Forensic Science Technician)
      - Education (Corporate Trainer)
      - Journalism (Book Editor, Copywriter)
      - Sports (Sports Agent)
    - Both
      - If both, how split efforts?

  o Steps taken so far
    - Met with Associate Director of Employment at OCS
    - Created a basic framework together

  - Discussion:
    o Phan: Traditional job in the field would be more effective because it’s more established. It’s more likely that (a) the companies have this program in place and wouldn’t have to develop something from scratch and (b) it’s very hard for students to organize something like this on their own.
    o David: Would this be coordinated by OCS, rather than YCC? Also, would this be on an application basis or would it be group shadowing?
    o Sam: It’s going to depend on the firm, but I’m envisioning an application process through Symplicity and the company would design its own strategy.
    o Isaac: I feel like an application is a bit much, but perhaps a statement of interest would be more effective and more accessible.
    o Sam: Right, and the specific responsibilities that the company would have are in the process of being standardized.
    o David: My concern is specifically that this could become an equally competitive version of the internship process. We just need to make sure that this facilitates exploration.
    o Sam: I need to explore this more fully, but if this does become highly competitive, I think there are other avenues for exploration that we can explore.
    o Jaime: I think there’s merit to limiting one experience per person per industry. That would enable people to explore but prevent a handful of stellar people from
taking all the opportunities. Additionally, you have to consider what is in it for the firms. When you’re looking at the larger firms, they already have established programs, enough interest, etc. At the end of the day, it’ll be smaller boutique firms that offer programs, and we need to find a way to loop in bigger firms.

- Adam: I’d recommend that applicants submit a general statement of interest and check off different industries that you’d be interested in shadowing (potentially in order of preference).
- Tyler: I actually think there shouldn’t be an application process, rather first come first serve basis. If you’re really into consulting, you don’t need to shadow! This should be for people who need to explore.
- Anna: Have you talked to Steve Blum about this? He sent out a survey earlier this year that asked students if they’d be interested in job shadowing, so obviously this sort of program is on his radar. I’d just recommend reaching out and seeing where we can tie in alumni.
- Yonghyun: One of the AYA directors is starting a pilot mentoring program with a few hundred alumni. So it makes sense to reach out and see how we can collaborate.
- Grant: How is this an improvement of what AYA already has? They already have a list of people who can conduct one on one informational interviews. It seems like this program would inject a lot of artificial competition and prestige into an already stressful job application process.
- Sam: I think that through a program like this, which is highly visible, students will feel more comfortable reaching out to employers. I think it will increase accessibility for students.
- Ben: I think a good compromise would be to have students indicated their interests but preference students based on how many offers they’ve gotten.
- Connor: If this is going to be a program that is institutionalized and run by an employer, they want to bring in people who they can see themselves hiring. Therefore, they’re going to want to make this a legitimate application process, just to that they’re not wasting their energy. Also, we should definitely pursue keeping the traditional consulting and banking options open to students and not just give up on them because those sectors are already popular.
- Maia: We know that OCS is already doing this, and this conversation will help us inform the structure of their program.

- **VOTE:** Move forward with the program
  - **PASSED 20-1** (dissent: Grant)
- **VOTE:** Selection based on a competitive process (statement for interest, resume) instead of first-come-first-serve
  - **FAILED 6-13** (approval: Sam, Chadd, Megan, Lauren, Adam, Phan)

**Elections Committee Nominations**

- **Presentation [MAIA]**
  - They will sit on the committee that facilitate and regulate YCC elections.
  - Solicited nominations from each college via the residential college councils, asked for applications, spoke with those who continued their applications, and selected the final group.
• Nominees:
  o Duane Bean
  o Andrew Bean
  o Dan Bond
  o Haley Adams
• Vote: PASSED by unanimous consent

Associate Membership Confirmation: Peter Huang
• Confirmed by unanimous consent.