

# FAS Senate

AN ELECTED BODY OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
YALE UNIVERSITY

## Report on the Expansion of Yale College

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FAS Senate, Ad Hoc Committee on the Expansion of Yale College

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## INTRODUCTION

In Fall 2017, the student population of Yale College will begin to expand by approximately 15 percent. The Senate's Ad Hoc Committee on the Expansion of Yale College welcomes this exciting and historic development. The opportunity to teach and mentor talented undergraduate students is one of the great pleasures of working at Yale. However, the increase in the student population also poses certain challenges for faculty, ranging from class size to the ability to find and train qualified teaching fellows to curricular planning for an expanded student body. It also raises important questions about future faculty hiring, diversity, and workload.

Yale College has long been the heart of the university, and a key source of Yale's identity as a center of intellectual excellence. In addition, Yale is fortunate to possess the extraordinary financial resources that allow for consideration of values beyond those of the bottom line. This report emphasizes the need to consider the best possible educational practices, in addition to adhering to budgetary constraints, in planning for the liberal-arts education and classroom experience of 800 new Yale students.

The report notes that the Yale College expansion, as currently conceived, does not include an increase in the size of the ladder faculty or of the graduate school. Under current plans, the process of accommodating 800 new students will require considerable additional labor from existing faculty, teaching fellows, advisers, and other members of the Yale community in order to preserve the intimacy and individual attention that has long characterized the Yale undergraduate experience. The Senate report recommends that Yale reconsider these plans with the aim of maintaining – and even improving upon – the high quality of Yale's undergraduate education. The report recommends an increase in the size of the FAS ladder faculty commensurate with the increase in the student body, along with greater attention to the expansion's impact in areas such as faculty diversity, non-ladder hiring, class size, course selection (“shopping”) period, teaching fellow opportunities, and other issues of concern.

Several committees and working groups within Yale have already begun to tackle the hard work of planning for the college expansion. The intent of this Senate report is not to duplicate those efforts or to provide a detailed blueprint of how to plan for the new colleges. Rather, this report seeks to summarize the history and current state of planning for the college expansion, to assess FAS priorities and concerns, and to provide broad recommendations for addressing the issues of greatest importance to the faculty. The report includes the results of an October 2015 FAS survey, in which 315 faculty members participated. It also includes a snapshot of basic information on expansion planning, including course enrollment statistics, section-size statistics, pay and job

conditions of non-ladder faculty, and a generation-long account of the size of the FAS ladder faculty.

One clear issue highlighted by the results of the FAS survey is the need for better communication between faculty and administrators regarding the college expansion, along with greater involvement of the faculty in expansion planning. This report attempts to foster that communication by providing background information on the college expansion process thus far, and also aims to highlight the desire for more robust and ongoing exchange.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Senate's Ad Hoc Committee on the Expansion of Yale College offers the following recommendations:

1) The university president, in conversation with relevant Yale officials and members of the faculty, should prepare an update for the faculty describing the current state of expansion planning no later than the end of the Spring 2016 semester. The report should include specific targets and plans for faculty hiring, teaching fellows, classroom space, and other areas of concern. This report should be repeated at least once per year as the expansion continues, with particular attention to the expansion's impact on class size, faculty hiring, classroom space, undergraduate and graduate student experience, and other vital measures of educational quality.

2) The May 2014 report of the president's Ad Hoc Committee on Yale College Expansion noted that between 2008 and 2014 "the total ladder faculty of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences has grown from 651 to 700 to prepare for the increase in teaching demand that will be generated by the additional students."<sup>1</sup> However, in Spring 2016 Yale employs just 651 members of the FAS ladder faculty.<sup>2</sup> Yale should increase the size of the ladder faculty commensurate with the increase of the student body.

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1 "Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Yale College Expansion," May 12, 2014 (hereafter "May 2014 Report"), available at [http://provost.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/YC%20expansion%20committee%20report\\_05\\_12\\_14.pdf](http://provost.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/YC%20expansion%20committee%20report_05_12_14.pdf).

2 The precise number varies slightly depending upon the method of counting cross-appointed faculty. An alternate count places the current number closer to 660 members of the FAS, with a cap of approximately 709. There are also additional factors areas which absolute numbers difficult to determine. It is not entirely clear, for instance, whether slots devoted to the Diversity Initiative and to the growth of the Computer Science faculty will count within this cap or will be considered separately.

- 3) The recently introduced Faculty Diversity Initiative should acknowledge and compensate for the impending expansion of the undergraduate population and its increased, disproportionate demands for and on women and faculty of color.
- 4) Any new non-ladder faculty positions created as a result of the college expansion should be multi-year full-time benefit-level positions. The university should not expand the use of non-ladder faculty beyond those areas (including language courses, labs, writing seminars) where non-ladder faculty already play a vital role in undergraduate education. The expansion should not further expand or reinforce an unequal two-tier faculty system at Yale.
- 5) Teaching fellows play a critical role in both graduate and undergraduate education. The university should develop a comprehensive plan for maintaining the quality of teaching opportunities available to graduate students while also adequately staffing large lecture courses with well-trained and well-qualified teaching fellows.
- 6) The university's current approach to course selection ("shopping") period is incompatible with the stated goal of filling all available seats in sections, labs, and seminars to accommodate the expansion of the undergraduate population. The university should continue its modification of shopping period along with the use of pre-registration and preference selection in order to reduce the inefficiencies of course selection period. The university should also adjust planning expectations to acknowledge that all courses cannot be filled to capacity while shopping period continues in its current form.
- 7) The university leadership should take advantage of the historic opportunity presented by the college expansion to initiate a campus-wide conversation about Yale College, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and the goals and ideals of undergraduate education at Yale.

## **HISTORY**

The planned expansion of Yale College marks the first major increase of the undergraduate population since the 1960s, when Yale opened two new residential colleges (Stiles and Morse) and welcomed female students as undergraduates for the first time. Since that time, Yale leaders have repeatedly raised the idea of further undergraduate expansion, but have encountered various hurdles along the way. President Richard Levin began the current expansion initiative in the mid-2000s. At the time, he noted the soaring level of high-quality applications to Yale and the desire to make the Yale undergraduate experience available to more members of that expanded pool. In February

2007, President Levin appointed a study group composed of FAS faculty, along with a small number of undergraduate students, to consider “the implications of potentially adding two new residential colleges.”<sup>3</sup>

In February 2008, that committee delivered its report. The report affirmed many positive outcomes likely to result from an expansion of the undergraduate population, while raising certain concerns about the new colleges’ integration into the Yale community. That committee considered many aspects of the college experience, ranging from security and transportation to extracurricular activities and facilities. The committee also examined those subjects of greatest concern to the faculty, including academic and classroom experience. On those aspects of the expansion, the February 2008 report recommended three main initiatives:

“Requesting that the president and provost set in motion a process by which each FAS department, program, and administrative office undertake ... detailed planning ... in order to strengthen Yale College and to ensure its excellence should the undergraduate population increase. Only when such planning is in place should the University move forward with the proposed new colleges.”

“Considering additional models for graduate student teaching that are in the best interests of both graduate student career development and undergraduate learning.”

“Asking the dean of Yale College to bring greater coherence and consistency to the design and oversight of advising for freshmen and sophomores and for majors in those departments where teaching and advising resources are stretched.”

This report recommended that the construction of the new colleges begin only *after* a department-by-department assessment of curricular and hiring needs. In addition, the report celebrated the fact that “A larger undergraduate college helps make possible a larger faculty, critical in some disciplines, and especially critical at a moment when new fields are taking shape and when interdisciplinary thought is becoming ever more important.” Finally, the report explored the limitations of existing classroom spaces, recommending a third building on the site of the new colleges that would include additional classroom facilities, and urging the university to develop a “strategic plan for the next five years that identifies how to improve and ensure the quantity and quality of all learning spaces on campus.”<sup>4</sup>

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3 “Report of the Study Group to Consider New Residential Colleges,” February 2008 (hereafter “February 2008 Report”), available at <http://www.yale.edu/opa/arc-ybc/ResColl-0220.pdf>.

4 Ibid.

The February 2008 report assumed that the new colleges would open by 2013. However, in late 2008 the financial crisis temporarily halted plans for the college expansion. For several years, the university operated in a holding pattern, anticipating that the new colleges would indeed open someday, but unable to identify precisely when or how that might happen. Partly as a result of this hiatus, the 2008 report's recommendations for "detailed planning" at the departmental level did not take place. Many of the report's additional recommendations for new buildings and classroom space, and for increasing the size of the faculty, were also put on hold during the financial crisis.

In September 2013, Charles Johnson (YC '54) announced that he would donate \$250 million toward the construction of the new colleges, the single largest gift in Yale's history.<sup>5</sup> At that point, after a five-year delay, campus-wide planning began to move forward. In the fall of 2013, President Peter Salovey appointed a committee to revisit and update the 2008 recommendations. This committee's report, delivered in May 2014, was more limited both in scope and length than the earlier report. Charged with exploring how to manage the college expansion in a new era of budgetary restraint, the committee recommended a series of modest policy shifts to address classroom pressures, including:

"offering the same course twice in a given semester"

"moving the largest courses into early morning time slots"

"devising means of dividing large courses into smaller ones that are more manageable in spaces that already exist on campus"

"shift[ing] course offerings to earlier in the day and more broadly across the teaching week – with the majority of courses, if not all, fitted into standard time slots"

"a small, targeted increase in funding for non-ladder instruction"

"more flexibility ... with respect to section sizes, and ... the use of non-traditional approaches to section instruction – e.g., professional students as teaching fellows, undergraduate peer tutors, and preceptors to oversee and teach gateway courses"

"continued close examination of the impact of 'shopping period'"

That report maintained that "In the [past] six years ... the total ladder faculty of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences has grown from 651 to 700 to prepare for the increase in teaching demand that will be generated by the additional students," and that no further

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5 Matthew Lloyd-Thomas, "Largest Gift in History to Fund New Colleges," *Yale Daily News*, September 30, 2013, available at <http://yaledailynews.com/blog/2013/09/30/250-gift/>.

expansion of the FAS ladder faculty would be desirable or necessary.<sup>6</sup> It declared as well that an increase in the size of the graduate school would be both undesirable and unnecessary. A more detailed discussion of these proposals can be found in later sections of the report. It is worth noting, for now, that most of these proposals found little popular support among the FAS faculty in the Senate's college expansion survey.

## **FACULTY SURVEY**

In September 2015, the newly created FAS Senate voted to create its own committee to explore challenges raised by the new colleges, to assess faculty priorities, and to make recommendations that might further enhance the planning process from a faculty perspective. On October 16, 2015, the committee distributed an online survey via email to 786 members of the faculty, including all FAS ladder faculty as well as non-ladder faculty on multi-year full-time contracts. This is, to our knowledge, the first time that the faculty has been surveyed about the college expansion. The results show a high level of excitement and engagement with the college expansion process; many faculty offered creative ideas and high hopes for the coming expansion. However, the survey also revealed widely shared areas of concern, as well as significant points of difference with the current direction and priorities of the planning process. The complete findings of the survey are available online at [https://yalesurvey.qualtrics.com/CP/Report.php?RP=RP\\_cT3rpOHqznTyIXH](https://yalesurvey.qualtrics.com/CP/Report.php?RP=RP_cT3rpOHqznTyIXH) (password: senate).

The anonymous poll asked for basic identifying information (rank and division) and posed several specific questions about possible strategies for managing the college expansion. The survey also listed the proposals offered in the May 2014 expansion report, and asked faculty to weigh in on the relative merits of each idea. Finally, the survey included open text boxes for faculty to expand upon their answers, and to raise questions and issues not addressed by the formal survey. Of the 786 faculty surveyed, 315 responded, for an excellent response rate of 40 percent. The majority of respondents (59 percent) were Professors, 11 percent were tenured or untenured Associate Professors, 14 percent were Assistant Professors, 10 percent were Senior Lectors, and four percent were Lecturers (two percent were "other"). Half of the respondents (50 percent) were from the Humanities, 21 percent were from the Social Sciences, 11 percent were from the Life Sciences, 14 percent were from the Physical Sciences, and six percent were from Engineering.

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<sup>6</sup> May 2014 Report.



There are three major findings from this poll:

- 1) The majority of respondents (77%) do not feel they have enough information about the Yale College expansion in order to contribute to their curricular planning over the next five years.
- 2) The majority of respondents are very concerned about the availability of qualified faculty, sufficient classroom and instruction spaces, and the availability of properly trained teaching fellows to serve the expanded undergraduate population.
- 3) The majority of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with the use of undergraduate learning assistants, adjunct, part-time or non-contract instructors to teach the expanded undergraduate population.

These statistical findings are supported by the many additional comments offered in the open-field questions. Many faculty expressed a sense of anticipation about the expansion's potential. "I'm excited to have more students on campus, and more of an undergraduate presence on Science Hill!" noted one respondent. "We'll manage the changes, we just need a little more support from the administration." Others noted concerns over communication and the size of the faculty. The most frequently expressed worry was that the expansion of the full-time faculty appears to be incomplete relative to the expansion of the undergraduate population. Of particular concern was the need for qualified faculty, which for the majority of respondents meant hiring more full-time ladder faculty, commensurate with the growth of the undergraduate population.

There was no support for a two-tiered teaching system in which contingent or part-time faculty compensated for broader curricular needs. Many respondents urged the university to hire additional ladder faculty. "We have to expand the regular faculty in the majors and courses where we know that demand will be strong," one faculty member wrote. Others noted the "very large staff of excellent non-ladder adjunct instructors" already present in many departments, while lamenting the stagnating pay and increased workload that have characterized such positions in recent years. Many respondents worried that the expansion would further diminish the role of the ladder faculty both within the classroom and within the university at large. "I'm concerned that the expansion of administration and adjunct faculty ranks will continue to outpace the growth of the ladder faculty," wrote one respondent.

It is clear that the majority of respondents supported the hiring of additional ladder faculty. Many respondents also offered suggestions for addressing instructional needs in discussion section, labs, and introductory seminars where ladder faculty have not traditionally served as the primary instructors. Many respondents encouraged the

expanded use of postdoctoral fellows and research scientists in the classroom. One respondent wondered whether recent Yale PhDs could be employed as teaching fellows for a year or two in a program like the recent Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowships. Other respondents asked if graduate students could be given more opportunities to teach classes on their own. “Yale graduate students may in many cases be more leading experts in their area of expertise than adjunct lecturers who would be brought in from outside Yale,” one commenter wrote. There seems to be some support for an expansion of the range of teaching opportunities available to graduate students. All of the preceding suggestions underline significant faculty wariness toward cheaper solutions to undergraduate curricular needs, and a preference for employing graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, or research scientists alongside ladder faculty for any expanding teaching needs in areas where ladder faculty do not serve as the primary instructors.

Comments reflect additional concerns about senior thesis advising and more general student support. One of the more insistent themes among the respondents is a concern that the intensive advising and pedagogical culture of Yale be preserved. Section sizes should not be overlarge, and seminars need to remain intimate. “Seminars are capped classes that are successful by virtue of their small size,” one respondent wrote. Faculty reiterated many times that classes need to remain small enough to encourage “significant” interactions with faculty. “One of Yale’s great strengths has always been a small school feel combined with a robust academic environment typically found at larger institutions,” one commenter wrote.

Faculty are also concerned about space issues on campus, a long-term problem which is likely to be exacerbated by the expansion of the college. Spaces of concern include Bass Library, rehearsal and laboratory spaces, as well as standard seminar and lecture rooms. “Those administrators who manage classrooms need to begin a listening tour to learn the faculty’s needs,” suggested one commenter. “Teaching in unsuitable classrooms is a constant concern.”

One final note: Many commenters registered frustration with the process by which the expansion has been discussed. Two commenters pointed out that this Senate committee is another group among several that have sought to consider the effects of the expansion. Despite these committees, our respondents indicated that they felt uninformed about and unprepared for the expansion. “I feel many of these concerns may be mitigated with more communication from the administration,” one commenter remarked. Several said that we need an “open and frank discussion with all FAS Faculty about the rationale behind this expansion.” Even faculty who are enthusiastic about the expansion of the College have felt excluded by this process. “The absolute lack of interaction with faculty on this manner leaves me feeling utterly disenfranchised by a process I would otherwise find exciting,” wrote one.

## **OVERVIEW OF PLANNING**

To begin to address this perceived lack of information, the Senate committee spent several weeks gathering background data from Yale administrators, as well as from long-term reports by the Office of Institutional Research. This section of the report describes the results of this information-gathering process, offering a short overview of important statistics and assumptions currently guiding the planning effort. The offices of the deans and the provost have shared a great deal of research with the Senate committee; the committee especially thanks Deans Tamar Gendler, Jonathan Holloway, and Lynn Cooley, along with Senior Associate Dean Pamela Schirmeister and Deputy Provost Lloyd Suttle, for their help.

This section is not intended as a full summary of all aspects of expansion planning. Rather, it aims to provide greater context and background for an ongoing conversation about key faculty concerns. The Senate committee's own assessment of these plans, including suggestions for improvement, begins on page 16, in the section titled "Questions and Concerns."

### **Planning Groups**

Many – though not all – of the issues raised in the faculty survey are currently under consideration by various groups throughout the university. The office of the Yale College Dean (Holloway) is the hub for planning related to student life, including extracurricular activities, dining, housing, and the residential college experience. The office of the Dean of the Graduate School (Cooley) is responsible for planning related to the Teaching Fellow program, with primary day-to-day responsibility falling to Senior Associate Dean Schirmeister. The office of the FAS Dean (Gendler) is responsible for planning related to both ladder and non-ladder faculty hiring, in consultation with the Faculty Resource Committee. Deputy Provost Suttle is managing logistical planning related to space and building issues, course scheduling, transportation, security, and other campus-wide concerns.

In addition to these administrative bodies, several committees involving faculty are currently engaged in expansion planning. In Spring 2015, the Yale College Dean's office created a Steering Committee consisting of four undergraduate students, four staff members, four alumni, and four faculty members to consider the college expansion as a whole. A separate "working group" in the College Dean's office consists primarily of administrative staff. An Ad Hoc Classroom Planning Committee of six FAS faculty, working under the leadership of Deputy Provost Suttle, is examining classroom space and scheduling issues. To aid this committee, Yale recently hired consultant Tom Hier, of

Biddison Hier Ltd., to explore time-management strategies related to course scheduling and classroom space. (For more information about Biddison Hier, see [biddhier.com](http://biddhier.com).)

### **Expansion Schedule**

The new colleges are scheduled to open in Fall 2017. During that first year, they will welcome 200 freshmen (along with enrolled sophomores, junior, and seniors who may choose to transfer into the new colleges). For each year over the next three years, the colleges will add an additional 200 students, for a total of 800 additional undergraduate students by Fall 2020. The expansion, in short, will occur in stages over four years, beginning with a 3.75 percent increase in Fall 2017, and eventually contributing a total increase of 15 percent over the current undergraduate population. In 2015-2016, Yale enrolls 5,532 undergraduate students. By Fall 2020, if all goes as planned, the undergraduate population of Yale will be approximately 6,300 students.

### **Course Enrollment Statistics**

Course enrollments vary widely from subject to subject. This is sometimes by design and sometimes by happenstance. Enrollments also vary from year to year in a given course. Despite this variation, overall enrollment patterns – especially the percentage of students in “large” classes vs. “small” classes – tend to be fairly stable from year to year. In planning for the expansion, Yale administrators have assumed that the new students will fall into roughly the same patterns of enrollment as existing students.<sup>7</sup>

In the Fall of 2015, Yale offered 1,117 undergraduate courses. Of those, 98 were lecture courses with one or more discussion sections; 157 were multi-section language courses; 164 were multi-section courses of another sort, mainly writing, lab, and introductory courses; and 698 fell into the category of “other,” mainly subject-specific seminars and small lecture courses.<sup>8</sup>

Enrollment statistics for Fall 2015 indicate that more than 75 percent of these courses enroll 19 or fewer students, while approximately 35 percent of all undergraduate courses enroll 9 or fewer students. At the other end of the enrollment spectrum, 3-4 percent of all undergraduate courses (or 41 courses in Fall 2015) currently enroll more than 100 students, and only .5 percent (six courses in Fall 2015) enroll more than 300 students.<sup>9</sup>

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7 Tamar Gendler to departmental officers, email, January 25, 2016.

8 “Undergraduate Course Enrollments by Type of Course and Class, Fall 2014-Fall 2015,” confidential report.

9 “Distribution of Undergraduate Courses and Enrollments by Size 2014-2015 and Fall 2015,” confidential report.

Seen from the perspective of student experience, however, the numbers look somewhat different. In Fall 2015, approximately 30 percent of all student enrollment occurred in classes with more than 100 students. Another 35 percent came from classes of 20-99 students. The remaining 35 percent occurred in classes of fewer than 20 students, with approximately 10 percent of all enrollments in classes with fewer than 10 students.<sup>10</sup>

Teaching fellows are a critical part of the instructional process, but work in a fairly limited number of courses. In Spring 2015 (the most recent semester for which TF statistics are available), 116 undergraduate courses utilized graduate Teaching Fellows. The average size for all sections in Spring 2015 was 13.9 students, below the stated cap of 18 students per section. Across divisions, average section size varied somewhat, with the highest average size in the social sciences (15.7 students) and the lowest in the humanities (12.3 students). Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors made up the vast majority of the student population for these classes. Decidedly fewer seniors enrolled in such classes, especially within the sciences and social sciences.<sup>11</sup>

### **Current plans**

Based on these numbers and patterns, university leaders are currently projecting that Yale will be able to absorb an additional 800 undergraduate students with relatively small adjustments to existing classroom facilities, staffing and resources, faculty hiring, and course scheduling. Most current planning is focused on the Fall of 2017, when 200 additional freshmen will arrive on campus. Planning for future years is still in flux, and all of the policies below are subject to change.

The following notes are intended to provide faculty with an account of the assumptions currently guiding the planning process, based on the Senate committee's conversations with key administrators as well as a recent planning email distributed to departments from the FAS Dean. The recommendations and views of the committee itself can be found in the final section of the report.

1) Current plans do not include the hiring of additional ladder faculty in response to the college expansion. Instead, most existing Yale classes will be expected to absorb the likely number of additional students (1-2 students in a 10-person seminar; 15 students in a 100-person lecture) without significant changes in room size, teaching support, or other measures. Exceptions to this rule, including large lecture courses that require additional TF staffing, will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> "Undergraduate Course Enrollments by Type of Course and Class, Fall 2014-Fall 2015," confidential report, FAS Dean.

2) The FAS Dean's office does expect the FAS ladder faculty to grow from 651 to 700 by 2020, in fulfillment of previous commitments rather than in direct response to the college expansion. It is not entirely clear whether 700 is intended as a cap on the number of faculty (in which case the FAS will most likely operate year to year at a lower number) or an average (in which case the FAS will shoot above that number in some years, below it in others).

3) Any faculty growth directly related to the expansion is slated to occur through targeted hiring of non-ladder faculty, especially in language and writing courses. For Fall 2017, the FAS Dean's office anticipates hiring approximately 20 new non-ladder faculty to meet additional needs in writing, language, and introductory courses. Planning for future years has not yet taken place.

4) There are no plans to expand the size of the graduate school in response to the college expansion. Any additional TF needs will have to be met within current structures, or through changes in policy exclusive of the expansion of the graduate school. These will occur on a department-by-department and course-by-course basis. Current projections suggest that only a small number of large lecture courses will be assigned additional TFs, and assume that remaining space in existing sections will be filled to the 18-person cap.

5) Yale does not intend to build additional classroom space in response to the college expansion. However, there are several new classroom spaces anticipated within existing construction plans, including a 500-person auditorium in the new building projected to replace the J.W. Gibbs Laboratory on Science Hill.

6) The university does intend to rethink the current scheduling system for undergraduate classes, with a goal of spreading classes more evenly throughout the day (including mornings and evenings) as well as making better use of Fridays. Consultant Tom Hier of Biddison Hier, Ltd., has been hired to assess Yale's current scheduling difficulties and to recommend alternatives. Biddison Hier recently redesigned the course time slots and academic course scheduling at Stanford University. For additional information about the Stanford course scheduling system, see <https://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/registrar/faculty/class-meeting-patterns>.

## QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Yale College has long been renowned for its character as an intimate liberal arts college within a world-class research university. Despite the planning work detailed above, the Senate committee – like the faculty at large – remains concerned that the addition of 800 new undergraduate students poses a significant challenge to this model, and risks losing some of what makes Yale College a special place to teach and learn. Perhaps the greatest overriding concern is the current tendency to view the college expansion primarily as a budgetary and logistical issue rather than as an opportunity to explore best pedagogical practices and to think seriously about what a Yale undergraduate education ought to be. We submit that a broader conversation is both productive and necessary.

The committee does not suggest that the way things are at Yale right now is the way that they always must be, or that there are no budgetary and logistical limits on how the college expansion should take place. We do believe, however, that the expansion poses qualitative (as well as quantitative) challenges that are best addressed through frank engagement with both faculty and students about the best practices for a Yale education. More specific concerns are outlined briefly in the sections below.

### **The size of the FAS**

According to the May 2014 report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Yale College Expansion, between 2008 and 2014 “the total ladder faculty of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences has grown from 651 to 700 to prepare for the increase in teaching demand that will be generated by the additional students.”<sup>12</sup> However, at the beginning of the Spring 2016 semester, Yale employed just 651 tenured and tenure-track faculty in the FAS. This number is down from its recent peak of 679 FAS ladder faculty in 2013-2014.<sup>13</sup> Though Yale currently maintains approved faculty *slots* for more than 700 FAS ladder faculty – and currently anticipates filling many of those slots within the next five years – as of this report a substantial number of faculty slots remain unfilled.

The current size of the FAS marks an increase since 1995, when Yale employed 576 members of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Seen from a longer time horizon, however, this faculty growth looks less impressive. The low numbers of 1995 were the result of a serious contraction of the FAS, down from 625 ladder faculty a decade earlier. If we begin our assessment of the size of the FAS in the mid-1980s, we can see that the size of the Yale FAS has increased less than 5 percent in the past 30 years. To put it another way: The size of the Yale FAS has increased by less than one faculty member per year over the

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<sup>12</sup> May 2014 Report.

<sup>13</sup> Yale Office of Institutional Research (YOIR), “FAS Ladder Faculty Headcounts, Fall 1982 to Fall 2014,” available at file:///Users/bfg2/Downloads/W127\_FAS\_Lad\_%20Fac\_Chart\_2%20(1).pdf.

last 30 years.<sup>14</sup> If we go still further back in time, to the early 1970s, the size of the FAS appears to have actually decreased over time. In 1970-71, according to George Pierson's *Yale Book of Numbers*, the total professorial rank (Full, Associate, and Assistant) totaled 687, while the "regular faculty" (including full-time "instructors") totaled 721.<sup>15</sup>

During this time of slow FAS expansion, the size of the undergraduate student population has also undergone largely unnoticed growth. In 1985-86, Yale enrolled 5,228 undergraduate students. In 2015-2016, enrollment was 5,532, for an increase of approximately 5 percent. In short, the FAS ladder faculty and the Yale undergraduate population have increased by approximately the same amount during the past thirty years. Over the past generation, there has been no increase in the size of the FAS relative to the undergraduate student population.<sup>16</sup>

Several other factors also complicate the question of historic faculty-student ratios. In recent years, Yale has implemented a generous junior-faculty leave policy, in which faculty at the levels of assistant professor and associate professor on term receive two full years of research leave before coming up for tenure. This is a welcome policy innovation, important for retaining junior faculty and ensuring that they arrive at the tenure stage well-prepared. However, it means that a quarter to a third of all junior faculty are not teaching in any given year. Similarly, the perceived expansion of administrative duties by faculty, many of which come with course relief, mean that a substantial number of senior faculty are unavailable to teach, or teaching in a limited capacity. (In either case, the solution is not to reduce faculty research leave or course relief, but to take account of these factors in determining classroom needs and in assessing the on-the-ground size of the teaching faculty in any given year.)

These various factors call into question the claim that Yale will not need to increase the size of the ladder faculty to accommodate additional students. They also highlight the need for faculty growth to occur in time to meet the teaching and advising needs of an expanded undergraduate population.

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14 Ibid.

15 George Pierson, *Yale Book of Numbers*, 358, available online at [http://oir.yale.edu/sites/default/files/pierson\\_1701-1976.pdf](http://oir.yale.edu/sites/default/files/pierson_1701-1976.pdf).

16 YOIR, "Student Enrollment by School and Program, 2004-2005 through 2015-16," available at [file:///Users/bfg2/Downloads/W003\\_Enroll\\_SchProg\\_9.pdf](file:///Users/bfg2/Downloads/W003_Enroll_SchProg_9.pdf); YOIR, "1976-2000, Yale Book of Numbers," available at <http://oir.yale.edu/1976-2000-yale-book-numbers>; YOIR, "Yale University Student Enrollment," 1875-2015, available at [file:///Users/bfg2/Downloads/W005\\_Enroll\\_Sum\\_Fig\\_1%20\(1\).pdf](file:///Users/bfg2/Downloads/W005_Enroll_Sum_Fig_1%20(1).pdf).



## **Faculty Diversity**

Related to the slow growth of the FAS ladder faculty is the stagnating—and in some areas, decreasing—level of racial diversity in the FAS. In 2014-2015 faculty of color made up approximately 16 percent of the FAS ladder faculty; of that group, slightly more than half identified as Asian or Asian-American. This is an overall gain in racial diversity of approximately 3 percent since 2003-2004, with a large proportion of that increase occurring among Asian and Asian-American faculty.<sup>17</sup> Over the past decade, the percentage of African-American and Latino/Latina faculty has actually declined, with particularly significant decline in recent years. The number of black faculty, for instance, decreased from 30 in 2012 to 24 in 2015.

This situation is especially notable when considered in the context of the substantial and very successful recent efforts to diversify the undergraduate population. In Fall 2015, approximately 48 percent of Yale undergraduates identified themselves as students of color, including 8 percent “Black or African American,” 13 percent “Hispanic of Any Race,” 19 percent Asian or Asian American, and 6 percent “Two or More Races.”<sup>18</sup> The contrast with the low levels of racial/ethnic diversity among the faculty will only be heightened by the introduction of 800 additional students, assuming that the new students fall roughly along the same demographic lines as the existing student population. Without significant ameliorative action, the college expansion will place additional burdens on faculty of color to serve as mentors and advisers, adding to their already disproportionate load of such work. It will also significantly impact—and potentially worsen—the ability of students of color to interact with faculty of similar identities, experiences, and backgrounds. Finally, it will impact the availability of courses for all students in the histories, culture, and politics of under-represented racial groups at a time when these issues are increasingly salient.

## **FAS non-ladder faculty**

The expansion of Yale College will have a particularly dramatic effect on non-ladder faculty in writing courses, language courses and laboratories, whose teaching duties are already among the most intensive in the university. Most non-ladder teaching occurs in courses with small sections, not easily scaled up to meet additional student demand. It should be noted that women and faculty of color are disproportionately concentrated in the non-ladder ranks. While faculty of color make up just 16 percent per of the ladder

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17 YOIR, “Faculty Headcount by Race/Gender,” available at [file:///Users/bfg2/Downloads/W106\\_Fac\\_RaceGen\\_HC\\_6%20\(4\).pdf](file:///Users/bfg2/Downloads/W106_Fac_RaceGen_HC_6%20(4).pdf).

18 YOIR, “2015-2016 Fall Enrollment by School by Race and Gender,” [file:///Users/bfg2/Downloads/W004\\_Enroll\\_RaceGen\\_6.pdf](file:///Users/bfg2/Downloads/W004_Enroll_RaceGen_6.pdf). The additional categories of “American Indian or Alaska Native” and “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander” make up less than 1 percent of the undergraduate population.

faculty ranks, they comprise more than 25 percent of the non-ladder faculty. Women, just 29 percent of the FAS ladder faculty, comprise 43.4 percent of the non-ladder ranks.<sup>19</sup>

Non-ladder faculty are generally paid significantly less than ladder faculty, possess less job security, and in most cases do not exercise the same rights of faculty governance. Despite this, they often teach equivalent if not heavier courseloads than ladder faculty. A 2014 survey of non-ladder faculty in the language programs indicated that 78% of respondents teach 2-3 course sections per semester – for somewhere between a 2-2 and a 3-3 courseload. The majority of these classes meet daily, with commensurate demands in terms of preparation, grading and student support.<sup>20</sup>

Approximately 70 percent of respondents to the language-program survey had been teaching at Yale for more than five years – and some had been teaching here for almost two decades. Despite this considerable workload and long-term commitment, non-ladder faculty earn far less than ladder faculty. Of the respondents in the language survey, 66% were earning between \$50,000 and \$59,999 per year, 27% between \$60,000 and \$69,999 per year and only 11% between \$70,000 and \$75,000 per year.<sup>21</sup> (Unfortunately, similar survey data is not available for other types of non-ladder faculty within the university.)

Non-ladder faculty should not, in short, be assumed to be temporary or transitional employees. They perform critical work in areas of high student demand, and often serve as undergraduates' first point of personal contact with a Yale faculty member. One priority of the college expansion should be to adequately support the non-ladder faculty who will be most affected by the arrival of 200 new freshmen in 2017. A second priority should be to make sure that any additional hiring of non-ladder faculty occurs in a thoughtful, secure, and well-supported way. The most sustainable and intellectually responsible option is the creation of multi-year, adequately compensated, benefit-level, full-time faculty positions, with instructors who can make a commitment both to Yale and to its new population of undergraduate students. Until now, Yale has largely resisted the extensive use of temporary adjunct professors, a widespread practice in higher education. The college expansion should not provide a reason – or an excuse – to deviate from this admirable policy.

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19 “GESO Releases Report Addressing College Expansion,” *Yale Daily News*, February 27, 2015, available at <http://yaledailynews.com/blog/2015/02/27/geso-releases-report-addressing-college-expansion/>.

20 “2014 Language Faculty Survey,” administered by Sybil Alexander on behalf of Language Lectors Working Group.

21 Ibid.

### **Seminars, multi-sectioned courses, and class size**

Although the May 2014 report identifies “seminars and advising” as one of four “key areas for detailed study,” the report provides little guidance about how an additional 800 students should be accommodated in courses for which small class size is an essential condition for effective instruction, such as seminars and sections of language, writing, and interactive science courses. A partial answer is suggested in the report’s recommendation of a “small, targeted increase in funding for non-ladder instruction,” implying that the teaching of Yale’s expanded undergraduate population will be provided by non-ladder faculty in larger proportion than at present. That report emphasizes the limited nature of the expansion of non-ladder faculty, however, and accompanies this recommendation with suggestions for increased “flexibility” with “respect to class size limits.” In the forums for faculty discussion described in the “Community Engagement” section of the report, members of the committee also emphasized “improved efficiencies” in Yale’s enrollment system to meet the expanded demand for student placement.<sup>22</sup> Improved planning and registration systems may indeed distribute students better across sections and seminars, and may even enhance the quality of some very small classes by increasing their enrollment. It is critical to maintaining the high quality of a Yale College education, however, that such changes occur only when they do not conflict with pedagogical aims.

The potential impact of an expanded number of students competing for spots in roughly the same number of classes falls into two broad areas: changes in the enrollment experience and outcome; and changes in the conduct and quality of the classes themselves. If enrollment limits remain the same as they are at present in capped-enrollment courses, with the addition of 800 students the rate of being turned away from courses will rise significantly. Students will presumably find other courses to fill their schedules, but the extent to which their courses will be chosen by available seats rather than by strong interest and individual aims will grow proportionately. For faculty, pressure will increase to manage students as bodies-to-be-placed rather than as individuals with particular interests, pedagogical needs, and aims.

As planning moves ahead, a distinction needs to be drawn between a “maximum number” that sets the outer limit for a particularly oversubscribed section and a “target number” across sections, with a recognition of the impracticability of an absolutely even distribution of students with complicated schedules and individual aims. The determination of maximum limits and of target numbers for seminars and other small classes will require fine-grained consideration of individual instructional contexts and careful attention to the potential impact of increased class size both on student learning and on instructor workload. At Princeton University, a recent expansion of the

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<sup>22</sup> May 2014 Report.

undergraduate population yielded an increase of standard section caps from 12 to 15 students. Yale's cap of 18 students is already higher than this, and many instructors agree that 18 is close to the outer limit for effective seminar-based instruction rather than the true ideal. For example, in the case of language instruction: The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages recommends that language class-size not exceed 15 students.<sup>23</sup>

Student and faculty experiences are separable but overlapping when it comes to the question of ideal class size. For courses in language or writing instruction, which place heavy demands on instructors both for individual conferences with students and detailed written responses to student work, an increase in enrollment of several students entails a significant increase in workload for the instructor. At the same time, increase in enrollment beyond a certain threshold may affect class environment and decrease students' opportunities for learning in class. Students in a language class with a larger enrollment may have fewer opportunities to speak in the language they are learning; students in seminars may find fewer opportunities to engage actively in debate about challenging material; students in a writing course may hear their own work discussed less frequently, as well as being afforded fewer chances to meet with their instructor individually. A determination to increase class size also runs counter to the trend in science instruction towards smaller or "flipped" classes in which students can engage directly in inquiry and hands-on discovery.

The optimal enrollment threshold for learning and teaching will not be the same across all disciplines or even individual courses. As the Yale student body expands, budgetary and logistical issues must not overrule ongoing attention to these pedagogical aims.

### **Teaching fellows and the graduate school**

The largest area of concern in the Senate's faculty survey was the size of the faculty, addressed above. The second largest area of faculty concern was "availability of properly trained teaching fellows." Issues related to teaching fellows also appeared in 5-10 percent of the open text-box comments. "By far the biggest issue is going to be availability of qualified Teaching Fellows," one respondent suggested, "since the classes can get larger, but ... the individual sections cannot."

Reports from the college expansion committees in 2008 and 2014 both asserted that increasing the size of the graduate student body was not an option – an assumption that continues to guide expansion planning. This places a considerable burden on the graduate school and the Yale administration as a whole to come up with new plans for

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23 American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, "Maximum Class Size," available online at <http://www.actfl.org/news/position-statements/maximum-class-size-0>.

properly staffing sections, labs, and introductory courses for an expanded pool of undergraduate students. It also raises questions about how to ensure a high-quality experience for graduate teaching fellows, for whom the teaching fellowship is supposed to be a rewarding mentorship exchange as well as a vital professional credential. Under current plans, graduate teaching fellows will likely take on additional students and teach larger sections without additional support. This in turn may increase students' time to degree, as well as diminish the quality of section discussion.

Current plans promise to accentuate some of the weaker aspects of existing systems for allocating and training teaching fellows. Some Yale courses, especially large lecture courses, already utilize teaching fellows with limited expertise in the particular fields or methodologies being taught in the class. In addition, some graduate students find themselves assigned to courses with little relevance to their own scholarship, and little utility as a credential on the job market. Finally, the existing TF system, when combined with Yale course selection ("shopping") period, can sometimes produce a confusing and inefficient scramble at the beginning of the semester, with the result that departments may hire teaching fellows with little background or preparation in the course subject.

Current projections suggest that a 15 percent increase in undergraduate enrollments will require only a 5 percent increase in the number of TF sections/labs. Even this modest increase, however, is likely to exacerbate current problems in the teaching fellow system.

Graduate administrators have proposed a number of solutions to the numbers problem: 1) filling open space in existing courses; 2) encouraging students to take seminars rather than lectures; 3) capping enrollment in non-required, non-prerequisite lecture courses; 4) increasing pre-registration to allow for more advance planning; 5) better curricular balance at the department level. While potentially laudable, many of these raise additional logistical and pedagogical challenges. It is hard to see, for instance, how to fill all existing course space in an enrollment system that prioritizes undergraduate student choice and last-minute decisions. (For more on this issue, see the section on Course Selection Period below.) Similarly, if students are encouraged to enroll in seminars rather than lectures, who will teach the extra seminars? As a general rule, the suggestions for reform do not fully address the question of how to make sure that qualified instructors will be available in the greatest areas of need, and they do not yet ensure that teaching fellows themselves will have a rewarding, well-supervised, and instructive pedagogical and mentorship experience.

### **Course selection ("shopping") period**

The report of the 2008 expansion committee noted that "the perennial lack of adequate classroom space is of course integrally tied to the fact that Yale does not regulate the

distribution of teaching times efficiently and that Yale has a ‘shopping period.’”<sup>24</sup> The 2014 report expressed a similar concern. “Yale’s current fragmented system of monitoring and allocating classroom space, along with the unpredictable enrollment fluctuations of shopping period, makes it difficult, verging on impossible, to compile full data on these spaces and their use.” The committee recommended “continued close examination of the impact of ‘shopping period’ on our ability to anticipate and respond to resource allocation needs.”<sup>25</sup> The 2015 FAS Senate survey added to the chorus of voices recommending a serious reconsideration of shopping period.

In recent semesters, the university has responded to these concerns by initiating changes in registration and in the course selection period. In Spring 2015 a new Preference Selection Tool was introduced to manage enrollment for certain courses before the start of the term. Starting in Fall 2015, a new preliminary class schedule requirement asked students to present a non-binding list of courses they wished to take before the start of the term. Undergraduate students complied at a 99% rate. This year’s *University Handbook* explicitly requires students “to create a preliminary schedule containing three or more course credits” at the start of the semester, and to actively remove courses that are no longer of interest as course selection period continues.<sup>26</sup>

Many groups on campus have expressed enthusiasm for retaining course selection period while continuing to refine it for purposes of stability and efficiency. For instance, the Yale College Committee on Teaching and Learning concluded that “a course selection period ... is pedagogically superior to a system of pre-registration” as it “enables [students] to think carefully about their education and to fashion a program through deliberation and consultation rather than simply conformity to a set of curricular guidelines.”<sup>27</sup> Many faculty have expressed similar views, emphasizing that shopping period encourages an organic, mutually beneficial relationship between students and teachers by assuring that the students in the classroom have (within reason) voluntarily chosen to be there. However, nearly everyone on campus – students, administrators, and faculty alike – would likely acknowledge that shopping period is often far more frustrating and inefficient than it might need to be.

Those frustrations and inefficiencies are likely to be exacerbated by the college expansion; the additional numbers ensure a greater scramble for seminars seats and discussion section slots. Perhaps more importantly, the ethos of shopping period rests upon the assumption that courses will be allowed to settle out at a wide variety of sizes, *not* that

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24 February 2008 Report.

25 May 2014 Report.

26 “Course Selection Period,” *Handbook for Instructors in Yale College*, available at <http://catalog.yale.edu/handbook-instructors-undergraduates-yale-college/courses/-selection-period/>

27 Ibid.

most classes will be able to enroll up to the limit or cap. For instance, a faculty member teaching a popular writing-intensive seminar may admit 15 students – the seminar cap – only to discover that a handful of admitted students drop the class on the day that they hand in their schedules. At that point, there is simply no way to admit additional students; those who might have been on the wait list have already signed up for other classes. Similarly, lecture instructors may scramble to add sections during shopping period only to discover that the high demand of the first week falls more dramatically than anticipated during the second. At that point, the teaching fellows have been hired, and the sections have been assigned.

In short, Yale will have a difficult decision to make as the new colleges open: Either we can hold on to shopping period as it currently exists, with its guarantee of substantial slack in the enrollment system; *or* we can substantially revise, shorten, or eliminate shopping period in order to guarantee full enrollment in all available courses. It is difficult, if not impossible, to see how we can do both at once.

## **CONCLUSION**

Our survey of FAS attitudes reveals broad unease among the faculty in all ranks and fields over the college expansion. This unease is due to the perceived, and likely, impact on the quality of the teaching and research environment at Yale. In addition to presenting these concerns and their ideas for how the stresses of the expansion might be mitigated, the FAS Senate's committee sees the impending expansion as an opportunity for broader reflection on how the college expansion can further the teaching and research mission of the College.

Such a reflection moves beyond significant concerns about classroom sizes and spaces, the use of non-ladder faculty, and the workload of existing faculty to explore the broader mission of Yale College and the residential college system. We might think about better ways to link Science Hill and the “downtown” campus – for instance, by creating greensward of bike paths and social space where Hillhouse Avenue now stands. We should also think seriously about the core mission of the residential colleges and their role in undergraduate culture. The colleges system was designed to provide an intimate and inclusive experience for students, who are assigned randomly to the colleges. Over time various changes, such as the raised drinking age and increased desire to live off campus, have pushed many student social activities out of the colleges. The result has been that students now compete to be chosen by other students for membership in social clubs at many levels: fraternities and sororities, senior societies, extracurricular activities, and club sports, to name a few. Social status and exclusivity is a problem that has not received

enough attention, and we are concerned that expanded student numbers and unchanging or slowly changing slots in student social activities may make the problem worse.

The expansion of Yale College can and should prompt a discussion of the “bigger picture” here at our university. How do we as a faculty body achieve our core ideals while expanding our student population? How do we maintain a teaching, learning, and research environment that values all members of our community? To what degree can the new colleges’ location on Science Hill be an invitation to greater intellectual and social exchange across the campus and across the disciplines, not only for students but for faculty as well?

We raise these questions to initiate a conversation that has been somewhat elusive in discussion of the college expansion. So far, those discussions have focused overwhelmingly on class sizes and individual faculty and administrative workload. In other words, we have been focused so far on the quantitative aspects of the expansion. Our final aim is to invite attention to the qualitative effects of the expansion as well. We hope that as a new, expanded generation of students enters Yale College, these concerns are increasingly in view.