



Report on Financial Aid

January 8, 2015

Tyler Blackmon

JT Flowers

Nicholas Stewart

Collin Taylor

Chi Tong

Table of Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. Clarity of Financial Aid Information
 - Introduction
 - Findings
 - Recommendations
 - Conclusion
- III. Student Employment
 - Introduction
 - Findings
 - Recommendations
 - Conclusion
- IV. Student Financial Contributions
 - Introduction
 - Findings
 - Short-Term Recommendations
 - Long-Term Recommendations
- V. Conclusion
- VI. Acknowledgements
- VII.** Appendix (Survey Results)

I. Introduction

In his first ever freshman address, Yale President Peter Salovey spoke of the essential nature of education in promoting socioeconomic mobility and allowing people to achieve their dreams. Speaking movingly about the experience of his father, President Salovey stated that “because of education, the ladder of opportunity was within reach.”

The Yale College Council shares President Salovey’s commitment to ensuring that all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background, are capable of taking advantage of the opportunities created by a Yale education. We therefore submit this report regarding financial aid policies for consideration.

Overview

In the midst of a lengthy debate during last spring’s elections about the direction of the Yale College Council, one issue emerged as a clear priority for all candidates involved: students wanted concrete change from the Office of Financial Aid. Alarmed by the rising cost of education and frustrated with the lack of clarity and transparency sometimes associated with financial aid, this year the Yale College Council assembled a Task Force of students who agreed to work together to find areas of improvement for financial aid at Yale.

Following an initial meeting, that Task Force decided to host a Financial Aid Town Hall, which occurred with Financial Aid Director Caesar Storlazzi in November, and to send to the Yale student body a comprehensive financial aid survey, which 1,191 students completed.

We decided to focus our efforts on three main topics related to financial aid: the clarity of information flowing from the office, student employment, and the student income contribution.

Each section contains a brief introduction, a set of findings, and concluding recommendations from our findings. It is our hope that by producing this report, we can show administrators the severity of the issues Yale’s rising costs have caused undergraduates - particularly low-income students who bear a disproportionate burden of increases in the student income contribution.

II. Clarity of Financial Aid Information

Introduction

Many Yale students have raised concerns about how to access information regarding not only applying for financial aid, but also finding appropriate financial documents throughout the semester. In this section, the Yale College Council seeks to evaluate the clarity of distributed financial aid resources to prospective, admitted, and enrolled undergraduate students. In evaluating these resources, the YCC will look over any materials on the Office of Financial Aid’s website and the financial aid award letter to make a recommendation to the administration about how to elucidate financial aid processes, thereby giving students clearer information about how to finance their Yale education.

Findings

1. Usability of the Financial Aid Website

The current layout of the Office of Financial Aid’s website is unwieldy and not intuitive for a student who has questions about her financial aid. Information can be challenging to find, and without explicitly searching for an intended document or webpage, students might not be able to find proper documents. Students frequently complained in free-response sections of the survey that the website was not user-friendly, and those students often resorted to simply emailing or calling the Office of Financial Aid in order to have their questions answered.

2. Lack of Outside Scholarship Support

To gauge the sentiments of financial aid students with regards to outside scholarships, in our survey we asked: “Do you feel that the Yale Office of Financial Aid has given you adequate resources to find outside scholarships while at Yale [asked of those on financial aid]?”

The responses were as follows:

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	96	9%
2	No	748	70%

3	I don't need outside scholarships to finance my education.		219	21%
	Total		1,063	100%

The YCC draws attention to the number of students applying for outside scholarships and their awareness of how such scholarships would affect their financial aid packages. Not only were 70% of students on financial aid not satisfied with the outside scholarship resources available to them from the University, but 43% of current students on financial aid were only slightly or not at all familiar with how outside scholarships worked into their financial aid award.

If students were more aware of the university’s policies towards external scholarships, more could be incentivized to apply for funding, thereby alleviating concerns about meeting self-help and student income contribution expectations. In the words of a survey participant, “It is a very long and complicated process. Having communicated with the financial aid office all four years that I have been here, I still do NOT have a clear idea about how the outside scholarship policy works. I understand the basic framework (outside scholarships can replace student contribution but then replace Yale grant money) but never understood how this would sometimes affect my parental contribution and other times not.”

3. Confusion regarding Office of Financial Aid policies

The 50/50 Split program offered by the Provost’s Office has also caused problems with familiarity, as 70% of students were completely unfamiliar with the program. Even 63% of seniors had never heard of the program (the lowest percentage among all four class years), suggesting its implications for students, particularly those on financial aid, could be made clearer. This split allows for 50% of a student’s wage to be paid by the Provost’s Office, with the remainder being covered by the business hiring the student. If students do not even know that they are dependent on such a program for jobs and higher wages, they will certainly not have the information they need to lobby for more workable financial aid policies.

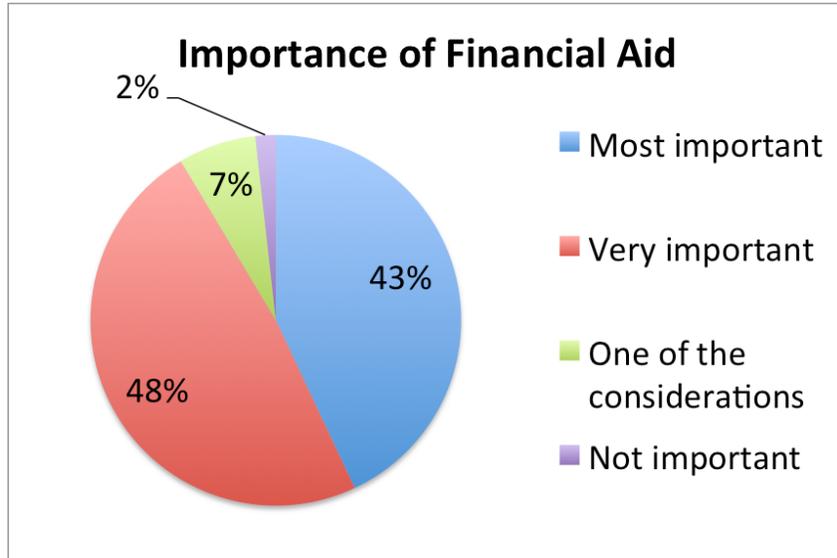
Current students also are unaware of financial aid policy changes. Changes about the Provost’s 50/50 split were not even announced to the student body, and there is little warning about increases to student income contribution expectations. Another example is the late fee, which charges students for paying their tuition fee late, even when the financial aid award letter has been disseminated late.

Moreover, while Federal Work Study is a major component of financial aid, 33% of students are unsure if they even qualify for the program. This indicates that a large group of students on

campus are unable to take advantage of Federal Work Study, as the information has not been communicated clearly to students.

4. Understanding the Financial Award Letter

Financial aid considerations are a crucial component of students’ college choice. In fact, of students at Yale on financial aid, 91% said that financial aid was either the most important factor or a very important factor in their decision.



And while the Office of Financial Aid’s website has an FAQs document to answer students’ common questions, the organization of information within the award letter leads to difficulty in anticipating correctly the financial need of the school year.

The financial calculation is divided into three sections: Estimated Expenses, Family Contribution and Financial Aid Award. While this arrangement is effective in showing that all need is met, the placement of term-time job allowance under Financial Aid Award results in a misleading interpretation that this amount is covered by Yale. Moreover, all other items (Vacation allowance, First year allowance, Yale Scholarship) under the same columns are provided by Yale, and there is no footnote to specify the source of each grant, so students are more likely to misunderstand how much award they will get from Yale.

Moreover, there is no real difference between “student income contribution” and “self-help” to students, as they will have to pay both using their savings or income. Thus, the information presented in the Financial Aid Award letter is unnecessarily complicated by different names of sources of funding that essentially mean the same thing.

In contrast, **presenting the letter in the form similar to the bill students receive at the beginning of a year** (i.e. showing the amount the family needs to pay directly to the University) is a much clearer and more comprehensible way to communicate the information to prospective students.

"It will save so much pain and heartache," a survey participant wrote, "Please make it clear. Explain to students from low-income backgrounds like mine that they do have a student contribution, even though the parent contribution is \$0. Explain everything clearly, instead of using terminology such as "Student Income Contribution" and "Term-time contribution" that confuses students."

Another important tool that many students under financial aid use in order to estimate the expenses of college is the Net Price Calculator. The tool provides a good prediction of the financial coverage from Yale. However, this Calculator targets prospective freshmen, so the calculation uses the fixed value of freshman year Student Income Contribution, with no further explanation of how this amount varies as students move on to sophomore year. Thus, it creates confusion for students by providing an inaccurate idea of their financial obligations later in their Yale career.

5. Anticipating Federal Tax Payment for International Students

During the first month of college, a substantial amount of federal taxes are charged to international students.. For a student who receives full financial aid, this amount totals about \$1,400 every semester. Freshman year students are reimbursed for the federal tax, but for all the following years students have to foot this quite significant bill themselves, which in effect means that their financial aid is significantly lower than the award would make it seem. While the rebate amount is around \$800, a significant burden is still left on students.

The administration and financial aid office, despite their many years working with students and the tax department, do not inform students of this federal tax. The tax payment is also not found on any website. Thus, students are unaware of this deduction until their accounts are charged. Concealing this necessary information on the tax from students poses significant difficulties. For freshmen, it leads to a serious spending cut for the first half of the semester, which disorients students. For all classes, the net effect of this policy is that, as one participant wrote, they are "forced to work many more hours at [their] on-campus job than might be suggested by [their] student contribution alone."

Recommendations

The YCC recommends the following changes to communicate financial aid information to students more clearly:

1. Direct links on the website

Regarding the information displayed on the Yale University Financial Aid website, the Yale College Council recommends the implementation of more links that lead students directly to appropriate forms while applying for financial aid. For example, from the section detailing the university's policies on outside scholarships, the website suggest the following:

"You must advise us of any new awards by submitting the Outside Scholarship Update Form found under 'Forms' on the Continuing Students page or the Newly Admitted Students page."

However, it would be more helpful if the website could directly link students to the Outside Scholarship Update Form, as it could be difficult for students to find the appropriate form on the website. We think this change would not only help students, but also save the Office of Financial Aid time by reducing the need for emails and phone calls to resolve questions.

2. Explanations on the effect of outside scholarship on financial aid package.

Two actions by the Office of Financial Aid could help students with outside scholarships. First, the University should specify clearly on the financial aid award letter the maximum amount that the University will allow each student to use from an outside scholarship. Second, the University should provide more support for students both online and in person to find outside scholarships to help fill the gaps in their funding.

3. More transparency in policy changes

The Provost's 50/50 Split, a program affecting a large percentage of Yale students, was altered dramatically over the summer without any notice to the student body. We suggest creating a link from the Self-Help section of the financial aid website to the explanation of the program on the student employment website. This would allow students to have direct access to the information, permitting everyone to better plan their on-campus jobs before they arrive on campus.

In the future, any policy change should be communicated to students through:

- emails to current students
- website updates

- brochures at the financial aid office, and
- initiatives from the Financial Aid office staff.

4. Explanation of Late Fee

The Office of Financial Aid should be more upfront to students about the presence and amount of the late fee and how to avoid paying it. The Office should also consider extenuating circumstances that may have prevented a student or a student's family from being unable to make payments exactly by the deadline.

5. Clearer Financial Aid Award Letter

In order to clarify the sources of each item under Financial Aid Award, a few modifications are proposed:

- Introduce a new "bottom-line" amount that a student and a student's family must together pay to the University. Though considerations about travel and books are helpful, they often confuse first-time students, who should not have to pull out a calculator to determine what their first bill will be.
- Eliminate the distinction between Self-Help and Student Income Contribution and rename this section "Student Effort."
- Place, in bold, a disclaimer on the initial financial aid award letter for all incoming freshmen that the expected Student Effort will increase dramatically beginning sophomore year.
- The Net Price Calculator should also include a similar disclaimer noting the large increase in Student Effort expectations after freshman year.

6. Information on Federal Tax payment

Students need to be informed of the Federal Tax payment and the procedure to claim taxes by the beginning of the year through the SIS system. This can be done simply with a note at the end of the notification through the Student Financial Services.

Conclusion

To quote a Yale student, "My financial aid significantly decreased from my freshman to sophomore year. It very much felt like my financial aid was higher freshman year to lure me to come to Yale, then decreased entirely once I'd already committed. It's also a huge burden on me to have to work so many hours a week to make money. Further, the financial aid office has been incredibly rude to my family. If I had known this would happen, I don't know if I would

have chosen to come to Yale. Unfortunately, I'm stuck. Yale's financial aid has proven extremely disappointing.”

Such scenarios can be remedied by clearer communication between the Office of Financial Aid and students, both current and prospective. While not every Yale student’s experience is the same, some students here have clearly had unnecessarily negative experiences with a University that claims to meet 100% of demonstrated need.

Through careful analysis of student responses around campus, the Yale College Council finds that making the entire financial aid process more transparent is the most immediate issue that can and must be addressed by the University. Given the wealth of resources provided by the University, knowledge of such important resources should be readily accessible. Through the above recommendations, the YCC hopes the financial aid office will make their policies clearer, thereby ameliorating some concerns brought forth by members of the student body.

III. Student Employment

Introduction

Although Yale students on financial aid who work on campus benefit from such privileges as a baseline minimum wage of \$12 an hour and a generous subsidy from the Provost's Office that encourages employers across campus to hire students whose need most qualifies them for the position, the system currently in place for matching students with on-campus work is not perfect and can be improved.

Anecdotal and statistical evidence suggests that current Yale students do not feel that their needs for term time jobs are being met by the institution's policies. Indeed, according to the recent YCC survey, 22% of respondents on financial aid do not qualify for federal work-study at Yale, and 32% of respondents on financial aid are unsure of whether or not they even qualify for the federal work-study program at Yale. From the hiring process to the delicate scheduling required to accommodate a term-time job as well as classes and extracurricular activities, students worry and stress about mixing work and school, with 56% of survey participants claiming that working long hours adversely affects their college experience.

Of course, some students on financial aid choose not to work. Such a decision requires some degree of financial stability, but students take the risk of giving up a regular source of income during the school year in order to pursue other more meaningful uses of their time. Some students interviewed passed up paid positions in favor of jobs in medical laboratories that fit more closely with their academic and career ambitions. They rely on their parents and their summer work to balance out the savings necessary to fulfill their student income contributions. This is a common story, as 55% of students on financial aid who responded to the YCC survey say that pay for their student income contribution by using family savings or income.

But for most on financial aid, working long hours is a necessity. These students do not have the luxury of passing up a steady source of income during the school year, so they often take positions that do not fit so closely with their academic and career interests.

Moreover, changes in student employment policy at peer institutions such as the University of Chicago have caused the YCC to think critically about whether similar changes should be considered at Yale. Feedback from students suggests that imminent improvements at the University of Chicago like the elimination of term-time work requirements for financial aid recipients would be well received at Yale, as well.

One of the components of the University of Chicago's new commitment to students on financial aid is career advising to help place students in summer jobs and internships. The

possibility of establishing such a program at Yale polled well amongst the students on financial aid who responded to the YCC survey, with 81% agreeing that the university should provide access to summer opportunities for undergraduates. Ultimately, our findings and recommendations detail the Yale College Council's best efforts to synthesize our peers' issues with the current institutional policy and to propose a range of moderate to aggressive solutions to these same issues.

Findings

1. Year to year increase of the Student Effort expectation

Over the period of five years between the 2009-2010 and 2014-2015 academic years, the amount that Yale College requires its students on financial aid to earn during the school year has increased by 22.4%, from \$2,600 to \$3,350. Assuming the Yale minimum wage of \$12 per hour, this increase in dollars per year required of students translates into an additional 62 hours of work over the course of the school year. Such an increase in responsibility takes a toll on students in the form of lost extracurricular and social opportunities and increased stress about ability to complete assignments and take challenging classes.

Student Contribution Increases 2009-2015

2014-2015: SH (\$3350) + SIC (\$3050) = \$6400

2012-2013: SH (\$3300) + SIC (\$3000) = \$6300

2011-2012: SH (\$3000) + SIC (\$2750) = \$5750

2010-2011: SH (\$3000) + SIC (\$2750) = \$5750

2009-2010: SH (\$2600) + SIC (\$2450) = \$5050

2. Ambiguity of job application form

The standardized job application form that the Student Employment Office maintains on its website serves as a common template for job applications that allows students to apply to multiple jobs with relative ease and efficiency.

However, some questions are unclear on the standard form. For example, it is unclear how long student responses should be on the question regarding job qualifications. And if we are trying to streamline the process, it would be helpful to have a place to upload a standard resume.

Moreover, students report general frustration with the job application form, citing it as an inadequate and unhelpful tool for finding a job. Anecdotally, it seems that many students find jobs through word of mouth and apply by contacting personal connections directly through email or a personal meeting. This process by which many campus jobs are filled complicates life at Yale for new students (and especially first-generation college students) who lack the advantage of previous experience on campus, and who often find that they have to apply to several jobs before finally being hired.

Indeed, according to the YCC survey, of those who responded and are on financial aid, 30% applied to more than 3 jobs this fall. This unnecessarily intensive process takes a toll in time, energy, and stress that can be difficult for new students to handle in their first weeks at Yale.

3. Length of job application process

One of the problems with the Student Employment application process is the timeline for finding and applying to jobs. Students return to campus at the end of August and expect to begin work as soon as possible, but find that it takes employers time to upload job postings to the Student Employment website and often wait up to a week before hearing back from an employer.

For a student who needs to begin making money as soon as possible, but also wants to have the flexibility to compare job offers, this delay can be costly in terms of lost earnings and lost opportunities. Standard wait times for job hiring can be over a week, and every week of missed hours correlates to additional hours that students have to make up over the course of the year.

In some cases, hours lost at the beginning of the year simply cannot be made up by only working one job. Many employers on campus cap the number of hours that students work a week in order to stay within their own departmental budgets. Thus in turn, students either have to look for an additional position to cover missed hours, or simply assume the responsibility for making that money during the summer. Two weeks of missed work during the hiring period at the beginning of the year can amount to \$250-300 of missed earnings that hang over the student's head even into the summer.

4. Lack of feedback from employers in application process

Beyond simply long wait times for responses from employers, some students report never hearing back from an employer at all. This lack of feedback can be very disorienting to students, particularly those navigating the job process for the first time, and ultimately leads to

lost job opportunities and lost earnings. Any days spent waiting to compare offers when a student already has an acceptance is time and money lost, which can be a risk many students cannot afford to take.

If students cannot expect to hear back from employers in a timely manner or at all, then the incentive for them is to take the first offer that an employer extends. This system actually impedes the job market for all students, because those that could take higher level or higher paying jobs have an incentive to stay in their lower level positions, thus depriving other students of jobs that should be available to them.

Although some employers may simply receive too many applications to respond personally to all of them, many are small enough that they can afford to send an email to student about the outcome of their application. At least then students can move on to new opportunities in a timely fashion.

5. Difficulty balancing academic and extracurricular schedule with work

Many Yale undergraduate students report that balancing academic and extracurricular commitments with a term-time job can be a challenge. In terms of pure time spent working, students could easily take one or two more classes per week with the 12 hours that they are required to spend working to fulfill their student effort expectation.

While some students might elect to spend those hours working to supply themselves with pocket money, others would surely jump at the opportunity to spend that valuable time during the academic day in class.

At the YCC Town Hall meeting in November, it became very clear that many students on financial aid view the student income contribution as a burden that hampers them from taking on new academic and extracurricular challenges that would enrich their lives at school.

Some students are able to strike a lucky balance between work that fulfills career goals or personal interests and simultaneously covers their portion of their financial aid award. But this is a rare situation, and most students have to work in jobs that do little to reflect their ambitions and passions and take up time that could be otherwise used in more enriching pursuits while at Yale.

Recommendations

1. Accelerate the timeline for job applications in order to begin the process during August of summer vacation.

In response to student frustration with the application process for term-time jobs, we recommend that the University consider changing the timing of the hiring process. It is common for students to apply for upwards of three jobs during the application process and then to not hear back from some employers for a week. This may be a quick turnaround time for employers who have dozens of qualified applicants to consider, but any delay for students in beginning a term-time job can be a serious financial burden.

Ideally students should begin work as soon as possible to avoid having to work more hours to make up for lost weeks of job searching. Yale can assuage this stress on students by moving as much of the hiring process as possible into the summer months in order to allow students to start working as soon as they arrive on campus.

If on-campus employers could be encouraged to assess their employment needs earlier in the year, they can post job openings on the student jobs website during August. Then, students concerned about beginning work as a soon as possible could apply during the summer in an effort to begin work when they arrive on campus. Valuable time during shopping period is unnecessarily lost when students wait on employers to respond to applications when the process could have easily taken place a few weeks before.

2. Assign low-income students an advisor to help secure summer and term-time jobs.

In the University of Chicago's recent report on its upcoming efforts to change its financial aid and student employment policy, the university placed a renewed emphasis on the importance of advisors as resources to level the playing field for students on financial aid.

Students at Yale similarly feel that increased career guidance would be helpful, and Yale could improve on the University of Chicago's effort by hiring advisors to help students plan and secure term-time jobs that fit with their extracurricular interests and compliment their career oriented work during the summer.

Students have relatively easy access to advisers in the Office of Career Strategy who can offer advice on exploring job and internship possibilities, but having one adviser who is personally invested in helping a student on financial aid secure a paying summer job and a term-time job

that reflects the student's academic or career interests would be a significant advantage and improvement on the current offerings.

3. Raise the student employment minimum wage and eliminate the \$15 cap in the 50/50 split in order to limit number of work hours per week necessary to fulfill Self-Help portion of the financial aid award.

One potential avenue for alleviating the burden of extra term-time work on students is an increase in the baseline minimum wage for student jobs. Student workers earning the minimum wage at Yale of \$12 per hour during the 2009-2010 school year only had to work roughly 217 hours to earn the amount stipulated by the Self-help portion of their financial aid award. In the 2014-2015 academic year, students earning the \$12 minimum wage will have to work over 279 hours to fulfill their commitment.

To make up for these extra 62 hours of work per year for which students are now accountable, Yale could consider raising the minimum wage for student work to \$15.437 to return the number of hours required of Yale undergraduates on work-study to 2009-2010 levels.

Additionally, a new provision of the Provost Office's 50/50 Split artificially capped a student's wage at \$15/hour, limiting students from ever staying in one job long enough to earn greater than that amount.

Conclusion

Upon reviewing the data from the recent Yale College Council survey and listening to the viewpoints of the student body and Yale administration represented at the Financial Aid Town Hall meeting, it is clear there is a disconnect between students and administrators over the appropriate level of fiscal commitment that students on financial aid should have to their education.

This responsibility is embodied during the academic year by the Self-Help portion of the financial aid award, and theoretically amounts to a 12-hour employment commitment during the week. As discussed above, however, there are many factors that can complicate students' ability to fulfill the term-time portion of the student income contribution.

The current framework by which students apply to jobs can become a burden on both new and veteran students due to its associate time, stress, and the financial implications of lost time. Scheduling work can be problematic during the academic year when students are unable to compromise class and exam schedules to fit in work-study hours. Any lost hours due to scheduling conflicts or missed weeks during the application process amount to additional

hours that the student has to make up either during the summer or with an additional term-time position.

Moreover, the Self-Help amount imposes a further burden on students in the form of lost extracurricular and academic opportunities. Students could use the precious time during the academic day to take additional or more challenging courses, or to delve deeper into extracurricular activities that actually hold their interest. To administrators, 12 hours per week may seem like a paltry commitment, but to students who more fully recognize both the fiscal and less tangible disadvantages that come from the work-study component of the financial aid award, this time can be a significant burden during the school year and in the summer.

There are many avenues that the administration might take to alleviate the strain placed on students by the current student employment policy for financial aid recipients who qualify for the federal work-study program at Yale, but in order to make any sort of change to help students, administrators must begin by acknowledging that holding a job during the school year requires sacrifices by students that adversely affect their experience as students at Yale College. Twelve required work hours per week is a responsibility that divides the student body because some students are forced to make limiting choices about their activities and classes in order to manage their jobs.

Yale College should, as best it can, minimize the impacts of socio-economic background on the experience of students during the school year, and the increasingly trying work-study requirement stands in the way of such a mission. Moving forward, the administration should seriously consider the above-mentioned findings and recommendations for changes to Student Employment policy as realistic avenues for addressing the concerns of Yale College students.

IV. Student Financial Contributions

Introduction

Very few topics on campus have generated as high a level of outcry among undergraduates as the slow but steady increase of the Student Income Contribution. Despite a long history of Yale becoming increasingly generous with its financial aid policies, the University has recently reversed course and decided to increase its student effort expectation almost every year since 2009. Just five years ago, the University expected a student on full financial aid to contribute just \$5050 toward her education. Today, that expectation has risen to \$6400 - and low-income students are feeling the squeeze.

The following section is meant to explore issues related to the Student Income Contribution specifically and the alarming rise in student effort expectations generally.

Findings

1. Current Student Effort expectations
 - Upperclassmen:
 - \$3050 - Student Income Contribution
 - \$3350 - "Self Help"
 - \$6400 - Total
 - Freshmen
 - \$1625 - Student Income Contribution
 - \$2850 - "Self Help"
 - \$4475 - Total
2. Nomenclature of the Student Income Contribution

The Financial Aid Office makes a point to separate costs into three large categories: the Parent Contribution, the Student Income Contribution, and Self Help. However, according to our survey results, the distinction between these three is virtually meaningless to students and their families in practice. Despite the University's expectation that students pay for their portion of tuition, 56% of students on financial aid reported having to tap into family income and/or family savings to cover part of the student income contribution.

This result, coupled with anecdotal evidence provided in the free response portion of the survey, shows that students do not view their costs in the way the Administration imagines they do. Ultimately, students only look at the total amount they are expected to pay to the University and do what they can to work with their family to come up with the money. Separating out the cost expectations into three artificial categories only serves to complicate the financial aid award unnecessarily.

3. Cost Disparity between Freshman and Sophomore Year

As shown above, Yale students experience a nearly \$2,000 price hike relative in student effort expectation between freshman and sophomore year. Such a practice has been defended under the practical assumption that incoming freshmen have less time to work during the summer than do upperclassmen.

The reality of the situation is that many low-income applicants compare offers between schools down to the dollar to see which schools offer them the best package. Many, unsurprisingly, choose Yale over its competitors because of its generous financial aid package. However, upon matriculation to Yale, many have realized that they chose Yale based upon a flawed premise. In fact, only 36% of Yale freshmen on financial aid said they were “somewhat” or “very” familiar with the increased Student Income Contribution expectation for upperclassmen.

The lack of information is unsurprising; details about the student income expectation increasing significantly from freshman to sophomore year is not mentioned anywhere on the University’s Net Price Calculator – not even in the 354 word disclaimer at the bottom of the results page.

The \$2,000 increase outlined above is a significant sum for low-income students, who are naturally more sensitive to price changes. Such unexpected jumps in prices force students into one of several unsatisfactory options: taking on multiple jobs to cover the gap in funding, taking out nearly \$2000 in student loans, or transferring to a more affordable institution. All of the aforementioned options reflect negatively on our University.

4. Impact on Summer Opportunities

Of students receiving financial aid, 55% stated that the Student Income Contribution had an adverse, limiting impact on potential summer opportunities. As outlined above, many students commented that the Student Income Contribution placed a significant financial burden on them and their families, forcing them to adjust their plans and make accommodations in order to meet costs.

Students in such a position reported an inability to accept unpaid internships in fields that interested them, having to pass up various research related opportunities (which are largely unpaid), and not being able to study abroad due to the financial constraints imposed by the student income contribution.

In the words of one student, the high student income contribution “limits students' summer opportunities and puts them behind with the rest of their very, very competitive class. How do you expect a student who works 10+ hours a week in the school year and has to go home during the summer to make money to compete with other classmates who do not have to work during the school year and who pursue internships and other resume-building activities during their summers? Having the student income contribution impedes students' access to resources to further their educations.”

Another contends that the summer contribution “puts students on financial aid in a very unfair set of circumstances and makes it impossible for [them] to take advantage of the same opportunities [their] peers are able to take advantage of, in terms of traveling and research.”

When asked whether a university requiring a student income contribution should guarantee students paid summer opportunities, 78% of all students surveyed responded affirmatively.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	803	78%
2	No	226	22%
	Total	1,029	100%

Unsolicited, a significant number of students responded to the question, “Is there anything you would like to change about the financial aid process?” with a firm stance that the University should eliminate the student income contribution altogether.

Ultimately, the student income contribution adversely affects students’ summer opportunities, significantly limiting their number of feasible options. The contribution has thus contributed to an imbalance in opportunity and mobility amongst students of differing financial backgrounds on Yale’s campus.

Short-Term Recommendations

The University could take a simple step towards improving the student income contribution as it stands today through the implementation of three steps in the short run:

1. Eliminate the distinction between the Student Income Contribution and Self-Help.

As was mentioned in Section 1 of this report, the reality on the ground is that the majority of students receiving financial aid are financially reliant upon their parents for significant portions of all of the aforementioned costs. Differentiating between the SIC, the Self-Help, and Parent Contribution only serves to make the process of discerning costs more difficult for students and their families. When presenting the financial aid award letter to prospective and current students, Yale should calculate a new “bottom line” amount that a student and the student’s family must pay directly to the university for an academic year. At the very least, Yale should eliminate the distinction between Student Income Contribution and Self Help.

2. Change financial aid estimates and the University’s Net Price Calculator to clearly represent the large increase in the student income contribution between Freshman and Sophomore year.

By doing so, the University would be presenting a more accurate estimate of the cost of attendance, giving students a chance to properly discern the financial aid package that is most affordable and practical for them.

3. Freeze/reduce the Student Effort portion of the financial aid award, which stands at \$6400 for upperclassmen and \$4475 for freshmen.

The string of recent increases in the student effort portion, shown in Section 2 under ‘Findings,’ has caused significant hardship for low-income students at Yale, and the problem has only gotten worse every year. While any suggestion of a tuition freeze is likely to be met with great trepidation by Yale’s administration, the Yale College Council feels that a proposition to stop the rise of the student income contribution is a realistic and important topic of discussion.

Tuition at Yale will continue to rise over time, but Yale should put a premium on protecting the time that students spend here from the pressures of paying for school. In just the last five years students have seen a significant increase in the amount of money they need to earn during the school year to account for the increase in the Self-Help portion of their financial aid agreement.

During the 2009-2010 academic year students were only expected to earn \$2,600 while in the 2014-2015 academic year that value has increased to \$3,350. To make up for this rise, students necessarily must also increase the number of hours they work per year. We strongly believe it is unfair for Yale to ask current students to spend more time working during the academic year than their former peers.

Moreover, this greater work commitment during the school year means poorer students have fewer hours to spend studying or pursuing an extracurricular interest. If tuition must continue to rise, Yale should ensure that the rise is reflected in the part of the financial aid award covered by grant, and not in the amount for which the students are personally responsible.

Long-Term Recommendations

The Yale College Council does not expect the following recommendations to be implemented overnight. Rather, we have included them in this report as a reflection of our beliefs and those of the student body more generally with the hope that they will guide future decisions made with regards to financial aid.

1. Develop a program for those students at Yale with the most need (e.g. those with no expected parental contribution) that would guarantee paid summer positions.

Yale has a unique opportunity to be a leader among our Ivy League peers on financial aid policy. We can develop a comprehensive program that targets the lowest-income students by guaranteeing them a paid summer internship. Such a program is not unprecedented: the University of Chicago recently unveiled a new program called “No Barriers” to provide funding for certain students who need it most to have funded summer experiences. By bringing this program to Yale, our institutions can be the first in the Ivy League to do so and assert ourselves as a pioneer in promoting socioeconomic mobility.

2. Full elimination of the student effort portion of the financial aid award.

We are not naive enough to think that Yale’s financial resources are endless, especially in light of the recent economic downturn that took a significant toll on the University’s return on investments.

Nevertheless, we are troubled by an apparent philosophy held by many Yale administrators who seem to believe that we have now reached a stopping point in our long-term goal to whittle down the amount students, particularly those with greatest financial need, are expected to pay each year.

In talks with the administration, we have frequently heard the phrase “skin in the game” used in reference to the inherent value of a student income contribution and self-help. The idea, it seems, is that the administration sees requiring all students to have a stake in their education as a character-building exercise meant to attach more meaning to the Yale education and give students skills they might not otherwise acquire.

By extension, this logic would indicate that Yale administrators would, given an unlimited supply of wealth, continue to require students to pay thousands of dollars a year simply because such student effort forces students to become more attached to their education. However, we feel this thinking is flawed and counter to the reality of how such a system actually plays out in students' daily lives.

The current system divides Yalies into two classes of students: one group that has time to pursue the kind of activities that the Yale Admissions Office displays prominently on its website and in mailers to prospective students, and another which must instead work long hours each week to (almost) afford to study alongside their wealthier peers.

Suggesting that low-income students would lose their "skin in the game" by not averaging 12 hours a week working a campus job requires us to ignore the wide swath of Yale students for whom working a term-time job is not a requirement. Those students are certainly invested in their own education, and yet the Administration does not force them to sacrifice part of the Yale experience and take a job just to prove their loyalty to the University.

The ideal, then, should be the elimination of the student effort portion of the financial aid award. There exists no inherent value in requiring some students to have more skin in the game than others that could possibly outweigh the class divisions caused by Yale's current financial aid system. Given Yale's more stable financial footing, the Administration and the Financial Aid Office should work to put together a long-term timeline for the complete elimination of both the student income contribution and self-help requirements.

V. Conclusion

There is no doubt that financial aid policies are incredibly important, a reality eloquently communicated by President Salovey last year and quantifiably reflected by the fact that financial aid considerations were either the most important factor or a very important factor in the college decision of 91% of the students at Yale on financial aid. We are grateful for the support already put in place by Yale to help students of different economic backgrounds, but believe that these policies can be improved, particularly with regards to the clarity of presentation, student employment, and student financial contributions.

We therefore submit this report with our findings and positions. We look forward to a healthy discussion with the administration about how to move forward, and are grateful for the accessibility and engagement we have received from them thus far. 

VI. Acknowledgments

This report was authored by Tyler Blackmon '16, JT Flowers '17, Nicholas Stewart '17, Collin Taylor '17, and Chi Tong '18.

We would like to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of over 1,000 undergraduates who shared with us their perspectives at our town hall and in the survey responses.

Finally, we are grateful to President Salovey and Financial Aid Director Caesar Storlazzi for allowing us to engage with them about the future of financial aid at Yale and look forward to a healthy discussion about how to move forward.

VII. Appendix

Note: The following statistics represent only students who responded in the affirmative when asked if they currently received financial aid. The survey was open from November 13-19 2014.

Initial Report

Last Modified: 11/30/2014

Filter By: Report Subgroup

1. Class Year

#	Answer	Response	%
1	2015	160	20%
2	2016	190	24%
3	2017	213	27%
4	2018	229	29%
	Total	792	100%

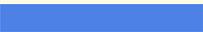
Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	2.65
Variance	1.21
Standard Deviation	1.10
Total Responses	792

2. Are you an international student?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	104	13%
2	No	685	87%
	Total	789	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.87
Variance	0.11
Standard Deviation	0.34
Total Responses	789

3. How important was financial aid in your college decision?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Financial aid offer was the most important factor.		341	43%
2	Financial aid offer was a big factor but was not the determining factor.		384	48%
3	Financial aid offer was one of the considerations.		54	7%
4	Financial aid offer was not important to me.		14	2%
	Total		793	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	1.67
Variance	0.46
Standard Deviation	0.68
Total Responses	793

4. By your best estimate, what is your family's approximate annual income?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Below \$40,000	184	23%
2	Between \$40,000 and \$80,000	220	28%
3	Between \$80,000 and \$125,000	204	26%
4	Between \$125,000 and \$250,000	127	16%
5	Between \$250,000 and \$500,000	6	1%
6	Over \$500,000	0	0%
7	Prefer not to answer	47	6%
Total		788	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	7
Mean	2.67
Variance	2.25
Standard Deviation	1.50
Total Responses	788

5. Are you currently receiving financial aid?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	793	100%
2	No	0	0%
Total		793	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	1
Mean	1.00
Variance	0.00
Standard Deviation	0.00
Total Responses	793

6. Have you ever received a financial aid award from Yale?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	0	0%
2	No	0	0%
	Total	0	0%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	-
Max Value	-
Mean	0.00
Variance	0.00
Standard Deviation	0.00
Total Responses	0

7. Have you received a financial aid award every semester you have been at Yale?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	778	99%
11	No	9	1%
	Total	787	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	11
Mean	1.11
Variance	1.13
Standard Deviation	1.06
Total Responses	787

8. How many semesters that you have been at Yale did you NOT receive a financial aid award?

Text Response
2
6
4
2
4
1
2

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	7

9. Do you currently qualify for the Federal Work-Study Program?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	350	46%
2	No	168	22%
3	Unsure	247	32%
	Total	765	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	1.87
Variance	0.76
Standard Deviation	0.87
Total Responses	765

10. Familiarity

#	Question	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Slightly Familiar	Not at all Familiar	Total Responses	Mean
1	The effect of an outside scholarship on a Yale financial aid award	276	270	130	90	766	2.04
2	The Provost's 50/50 Split*	82	89	78	516	765	3.34
3	The changes in Student Income Contribution after freshman year	246	181	140	197	764	2.38

Statistic	The effect of an outside scholarship on a Yale financial aid award	The Provost's 50/50 Split*	The changes in Student Income Contribution after freshman year
Min Value	1	1	1
Max Value	4	4	4
Mean	2.04	3.34	2.38
Variance	1.00	1.10	1.40
Standard Deviation	1.00	1.05	1.18
Total Responses	766	765	764

11. Do you feel that the Yale Office of Financial Aid has given you adequate resources to find outside scholarships while at Yale?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	75	10%
2	No	587	77%
3	I don't need outside scholarships to finance my education.	97	13%
Total		759	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	2.03
Variance	0.23
Standard Deviation	0.48
Total Responses	759

12. Do you currently receive any outside scholarships to finance your Yale education?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	278	37%
2	No	483	63%
Total		761	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.63
Variance	0.23
Standard Deviation	0.48
Total Responses	761

13. Has the student income contribution requirement ever limited your options in terms of summer opportunities?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	413	55%
2	No	336	45%
	Total	749	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.45
Variance	0.25
Standard Deviation	0.50
Total Responses	749

14. Have you ever received an additional outside scholarship during your time at Yale?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	177	37%
2	No	304	63%
	Total	481	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.63
Variance	0.23
Standard Deviation	0.48
Total Responses	481

15. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? "It is reasonable for Yale to expect some students to take out loans to finance their undergraduate educations."

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Strongly agree	25	3%
2	Somewhat agree	118	16%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	62	8%
4	Somewhat disagree	201	27%
5	Strongly disagree	350	46%
	Total	756	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	3.97
Variance	1.47
Standard Deviation	1.21
Total Responses	756

16. Approximately how much do you expect to take out in student loans by the time of your graduation from Yale College?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	\$0	402	54%
2		134	18%
3	Between \$5,000 and \$10,000	75	10%
4	Between \$10,001 and \$15,000	55	7%
5	Between \$15,001 and \$20,000	28	4%
6	>\$20,000	55	7%
	Total	749	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	6
Mean	2.12
Variance	2.43
Standard Deviation	1.56
Total Responses	749

17. How do you pay for the your expected student income contribution? (check all that apply)

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Student loans	151	20%
2	Personal income/savings	494	66%
3	Personal summer earnings	409	54%
4	Family income/savings	418	55%
5	Outside Scholarships	249	33%
6	Unsure	41	5%
7	Other	24	3%

Other
Student Job
Crying myself to sleep at night worrying about making how I'll meet next year's number
I don't spend the money in the first place
Student on-campus job
on campus jobs
Work
family loans
Parents' employers
On-campus job
Work
work study
on campus job
Fundraising from family
Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend
WORK
donation from grandmother
My parents pay for it because as a student athlete I don't have time to work to pay it off
Savings from campus job
term-time job
On-campus job
Working
Yale university

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	7
Total Responses	754

18. Should a university requiring a student income contribution guarantee its students paid summer jobs?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	608	81%
2	No	144	19%
	Total	752	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.19
Variance	0.16
Standard Deviation	0.39
Total Responses	752

19. About how many hours do you work per week during the school year?

#	Answer	Response	%
2	0-5 hours	90	18%
3	5-10 hours	253	50%
4	10-15 hours	119	24%
5	More than 15 hours	43	9%
	Total	505	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	5
Mean	3.23
Variance	0.70
Standard Deviation	0.84
Total Responses	505

20. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? "It is reasonable for Yale to expect some students to work on-campus during the term to finance their education."

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly agree		146	20%
2	Somewhat agree		283	38%
3	Neither agree nor disagree		61	8%
4	Somewhat disagree		143	19%
5	Strongly disagree		111	15%
	Total		744	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	2.72
Variance	1.88
Standard Deviation	1.37
Total Responses	744

21. About how many on-campus jobs did you apply to this year?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	0		239	32%
2	1-2		274	37%
3	3-4		112	15%
4	5-7		54	7%
5	More than 7		63	8%
	Total		742	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	2.23
Variance	1.48
Standard Deviation	1.22
Total Responses	742

22. Do you currently have an on-campus job.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	490	66%
2	No	251	34%
	Total	741	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.34
Variance	0.22
Standard Deviation	0.47
Total Responses	741

23. Did you find it difficult to secure an on-campus job this year?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	230	31%
2	No	307	42%
3	I did not attempt to secure an on-campus job this year.	201	27%
	Total	738	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	1.96
Variance	0.58
Standard Deviation	0.76
Total Responses	738

24. About how many off-campus term-time jobs did you apply to this year?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	0	648	87%
2	1-2	77	10%
3	3-4	12	2%
4	5-7	1	0%
5	More than 7	4	1%
	Total	742	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	1.16
Variance	0.24
Standard Deviation	0.49
Total Responses	742

25. Do you currently have an off-campus term-time job.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	51	7%
2	No	693	93%
	Total	744	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.93
Variance	0.06
Standard Deviation	0.25
Total Responses	744

26. Did you find it difficult to secure an off-campus term-time job this year?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	60	8%
2	No	59	8%
3	I did not attempt to secure an off-campus term-time job this year.	624	84%
	Total	743	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	2.76
Variance	0.34
Standard Deviation	0.59
Total Responses	743

27. Does working a student job adversely affect your Yale experience?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	18	56%
4	No	14	44%
	Total	32	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	2.31
Variance	2.29
Standard Deviation	1.51
Total Responses	32

28. In what way does your student job affect your Yale experience? (check all that apply)

#	Answer	Response	%
1	It limits my extracurricular activities	16	100%
2	It leads to timing conflicts/scheduling issues in the course selection process	13	81%
3	I cannot take as heavy/challenging of a course load	14	88%
4	Other (write in as many as apply)	4	25%

Other (write in as many as apply)

my grades suffer from working ~15 hours a week

I constantly need to think of the tradeoffs between working to earn money and doing well in my course work

I can't take jobs that would benefit career development

I don't get to spend as much time with classmates and don't get to know them as well.

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Total Responses	16

29. Do you find it difficult to earn the full amount of the student contribution expected as part of your financial aid award?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	506	68%
2	No	144	19%
3	I am unsure about the expected student contribution.	90	12%
Total		740	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	1.44
Variance	0.49
Standard Deviation	0.70
Total Responses	740

30. Is there anything you would like to change about the financial aid process?

Text Response

Make it significantly less obtuse and painful. Make the officers kinder and more understanding. Eliminate loans and student contributions as these place an outsize burden only on those students that need them. At a school as wealthy as Yale, no student should go into debt to finance their education.

Yes, the financial aid significantly decreased from my freshman to sophomore year. It very much felt like my financial aid was higher last year to lure me to come to Yale, then decreased entirely once I'd already committed. It's also a huge burden on me to have to work so many hours a week to make money, when the rest of Yalies do not have to do so. Further, the financial aid office has been incredibly rude to my family, sending us facetious emails and treating us like children. If I had known this would happen, I don't know if I would have chosen to come to Yale. Unfortunately, I'm stuck with these large loans and a financial aid office that is disrespectful. Yale's financial aid has proved extremely disappointing.

No student contribution

Get rid of the student income contribution- it does nothing. If the argument is that it forces students to pay for their own education and therefore gives them a stake in it, my comment is that those who are already having their education paid for by their parents have them pay for the SIC as well. On the other hand, those who are on financial aid (whether partial or full) are being forced to work a job to pay for their education, and this detracts from it, because now they must deal with an additional burden that rich students must not. Combined with how hard it can be to get on-campus jobs, especially in conjunction with busy schedules that Yale students are often expected to keep, this can mean that students are forced to take out loans to pay for their contribution. There's nothing inherently wrong about that, but let's either get rid of the claim that Yale students don't need loans, give every Yale student a guaranteed job that will pay for SIC (either during the summer or the term), or let's get rid of the SIC. One of these seems more palpable than the others, and I think we all know which one it is.

Overall, the financial aid programme at Yale is fantastic. I would only make two suggestions: 1) Remove the need for some students to take out loans, and 2) Raise the income cutoff for financial aid eligibility.

Giving more financial aid is always nice, though I realize that isn't always feasible.

Please consider eliminating or significantly decreasing the summer contribution. It puts students on financial aid in a very unfair set of circumstances and makes it impossible for us to take advantage of the same opportunities our peers are able to take advantage of, in terms of traveling and research. And, while I understand the need to work during the school year, I would suggest a second look at the amount we are expected to pay relative to the average wages and work time of students with on-campus jobs.

Part of what drew me to Yale was the culture of extracurriculars. It was disheartening to discover that I would not be able to pursue leadership positions in Yale's largest extracurricular programs while still working enough hours to fulfill my student income contribution. When you look at the economic and racial makeups of organizations like YIRA, YDN, YDA, and YCC, it's clear that low-income, minority students are seriously underrepresented. I think the student income contribution is part of the reason why.

The amount of aid that is giving freshman year should not dramatically decrease when a student becomes a sophomore, even when the parents make the same amount of money.

The student income contribution, both the summer contribution and the term-time contribution, limits opportunities for students receiving financial aid relative to students not receiving financial aid. I want to go abroad this summer, and ISA will cover some of the cost of going - but it will

not make up for the summer income contribution I'm not earning while I'm away. The term-time contribution also limits my choices during the year: eight or ten hours in a week is a lot to a Yale student. Please, consider reducing or eliminating the student contribution.

The student income contribution and student assets contributions are unfair and unreasonable to students on financial aid. They limit summer opportunities and funnel students on financial aid into high-paying finance internships, limiting opportunities for intellectual exploration during the summers. In addition, assessing a fee on assets held by students—even assets earned during the summer—is unfair and discourages students from working.

I didn't receive my package until after the first deadline for payments. As a result, I had to pay a fee.

Either eliminate the student income contribution or make it mandatory for everyone. Why should only students on financial aid be asked to help finance their education? Shouldn't all students share the responsibility of putting themselves through Yale, so as not to be overly burdensome on their parents' finances? What, so only the poor have to work, and the wealthy can get off scot-free?

I'd like there to be a more comprehensive financial aid calculator, because all of the increase in income that my parents made last year went to my college payments. I don't think that, even considering that my sibling is no longer in college, my tuition should have risen so much.

I would love to change the late fees. I feel like it is ridiculous that students have to pay late fees because they did not receive their financial aid award letter before the deadline. If the students submitted all of their information before the deadline, if the award decision comes after the first payment date, a late fee should not be incurred.

The student income contribution should be done away with. My family basically pays mine because my student income is used to keep me afloat during the school year. Coming from a warm climate, I have to buy new winter clothes, and since I have a job I tend to spend a bit of extra money on coffee and meals because of my work hours. It's absurd to ask me to save all of my income because my family can not afford to pay for all of the things that I need during the semester to live comfortably, that is unless the financial aid department would rather I live uncomfortably. Even though we have no family contribution, the student contribution is still a heavy burden. We've barely been able to pay it the last couple of times. I'm trying to get out of college without taking out loans because I've seen how difficult they are on my brother (who wasn't even able to finish a community college because we were no longer able to pay), and at this rate I probably won't be able to avoid them. So basically, I think the student income contribution is absolutely absurd for students whose family doesn't have to pay the family contribution.

Yale is incredibly helpful once they decide a student needs financial aid, however, it seems they are reluctant to decide that a student requires financial aid. I have known people to not get any financial aid because of their grandparent's savings (that the student was not using) for whatever reason. It was very unfortunate.

I am truly thankful to have received any aid; however, I think financial aid packages need to reflect unique family situations to a greater extent. Both my parents have suffered from health issues, taking a huge toll on my family's financials. However, there has been no flexibility this year to adjust my scholarship. The properties my family owns are small apartments (that are losing value) in areas where my dad had to pick up extra jobs or are close to hospitals/treatment centers and the fact that this was considered hidden assets is disheartening. I work multiple jobs, including night shifts over the summer, and have even tailored my career interests so that I can be self-sufficient after graduation. I feel like this issue is oddly enough more relevant to people in the upper middle bracket (80,000-120,000). I do not qualify for federal work study or certain student loans, but the fact is my family's financial situation is far worse than what it is on paper. I think the financial aid office needs to be more receptive to this.

One important thing that needs to be fixed is alerting families about the deadlines for filling out

requirements such as FAFSA and the like. The financial aid website is disorganized and does not have a calendar with clear details about deadlines and when to fill out what to qualify for financial aid.

Base financial aid award on AGI as reported on the IRS 1040 rather than on all \$ that comes through (but is not touched or lost for other reasons)

It's very hard for me to earn enough for my student contribution (which this year is over \$4,000) when I am taking 5.5 credits as a science major and doing my own research. I have barely enough time to sleep, let alone work a job that will allow me to earn ~\$2000 a semester.

Because of this, my parents have to cover my student contribution, even though their expected contribution is \$0. It's a little shitty of Yale to keep raising my contribution every year because my parents will end up having to pay it anyway if I'm trying to get enough research experience in (and if I'm trying to get good grades). My parents work very hard to support me, so it seems unfair to them to say that they have to pay nothing when in reality they do have to pay a decent amount every year for my travel, books, and student contribution.

Because outside scholarships reduce Yale's financial aid, the thousands of dollars from these scholarship foundations do not actually benefit me very much.

Make the process and requirements more transparent. Many students on full financial aid seem to be dismayed by Yale's help system, and they may feel this because they feel like they have been misled by Yale. I have heard the phrase, "missing out on the full Yale experience," and perhaps there needs to be a discussion on what is meant by a full Yale experience as well. I have spent time taking classes at a State University before and there most students hold jobs (on and off campus) and nobody talks about missing out on the full college experience because of the multiple jobs they hold or the loans they need to take out. I am not commenting at all about whether they should or shouldn't make those comments -- rather about the fact that the discussion itself exist. I could see why some student find Yale's financial aid mission misleading/confusing when they first enter the school. While attracting students from a diverse range of socio-economic levels is beneficial for the College and University as a whole, expectations of the student term-time jobs (among other factors) should be communicated clearly as I think it is the source of a lot of frustration for students on financial aid (or perhaps renegotiate these factors with a lot of student input - and not just from students on financial aid, but a representative group of student body because any change will affect the entire student body some way or another).

I wish the office had a better communication system with students, so that they can ask questions. I also had a really hard time getting the office to understand that I am in a single-parent family and that I should/could only provide one parent's information, which was extremely inappropriate. Further, I would love to take advantage of some summer opportunities to learn and explore which would be unpaid, but I don't think I can meet my student income contribution for next year if I do so.

Yale needs to offer more guidance for students seeking student loans. I went to the office of financial aid with questions and was largely redirected to the federal website to conduct more research, but it was the confusing and overwhelming amount of information on that website that led me to the office in the first place. I was and am still lost on the loan process, and Yale hasn't helped.

Yes. So much. It's incredibly opaque and confusing. Most important, though, is the summer and term-time contribution component. It's unfair. It's burdensome. It's discriminatory. It has to go. More money from the financial aid should be given directly to students.

Get rid of the student income contribution because it limits students' summer opportunities and puts them behind with the rest of their very, very competitive class. How do you expect a student who works 10+ hours a week in the school year and has to go home during the summer to make money to compete with other classmates who do not have to work during the school year and who pursue internships and other resume-building activities during their summers?

Having the student income contribution impedes students' access to resources to further their educations.

streamline processing - after finishing documentation in september, it took a full month to receive an updated award (after being told it would be available by the time of the next bill, within ten days)

I would really like scheduled meetings with financial aid officer in charge of my file to make sure that everything is on track for the year. For example, I was surprised by a large student bill one month at the beginning of the year. It turned out that some of the paperwork for my outside scholarship had not processed properly, but I didn't know that until the bill came. I think it would've been beneficial to have a meeting with my personal financial aid officer at the beginning of each semester.

I believe Yale should eliminate the student income contribution, for starters.

Yale doesn't make clear the fact that international students who receive financial aid will have to pay a significant amount of federal tax on their aid awards each semester. For a student who receives full financial aid, this comes to around \$1,400 every semester. Freshman year students are reimbursed for the federal tax, but for all the following years students have to foot this quite significant bill themselves, which in effect means that the financial aid is significantly lower than the award would make it seem. It is true that after filing taxes students in this situation will usually receive a rebate -- and this is what the fin aid office suggests we use to pay the federal tax -- but last year my rebate was around \$800, which hardly covers the almost \$3,000 I will have to pay this year in tax. The net effect of this is that I'm forced to work many more hours at my on-campus job than might be suggested by my student contribution alone. Of course, I'm grateful that it's possible for me to do this at all, but it means that a huge portion of my free time is spent at work, often at the expense of classes and extra-curricular involvement.

Make the billing process clear from the beginning. Be upfront about changes in student contribution after freshman year. Reach out to first-generation college students and low-income students to help with the process.

The biggest problem with financial aid is the burden of the summer income contribution coupled with the prevalence of low-paying/unpaid internships, especially for freshmen and sophomores. It puts students who don't have their contribution covered by outside scholarships in the unfair position of either working a retail or food service job at home or taking out loans to secure an internship that provides valuable experience/networking/resume boost. Even assuming a student has secured a competitive fellowship to cover the cost of living for a low-paying/unpaid internship, they still face an opportunity cost, since they could have lived at home for much less and made money towards the contribution. Even assuming students should make some contribution towards their education, this choice either (1) puts low-income students at a disadvantage leading into junior and senior year hiring, or (2) forces them to take on more hours during the school year, preventing them from devoting time to classes as well as extracurriculars that make students more engaged and well-rounded. Also: - Having to pay for the CSS/Profile is unlike Princeton's free application for financial aid. - The International Summer Award is partially taxable, but there appears to be little information/coordination across the financial aid and CIPE offices to help students (and even tax preparers) correctly report this.

Yale severely disadvantages the children of divorced parents by automatically assuming that students receive support from both parents.

I don't like how financial aid can fluctuate so much within four years. Other schools have a policy wherein they are guaranteed at least as much financial aid as they got in freshman year. Being expected to work during the year and summer to meet the requirements for the student contribution is ridiculous. It really should be one or the other. I know a lot of students that have had to decline amazing summer opportunities because they could not afford to take them given that they were still responsible for a \$3,000 student contribution for the summer on top of having to pay rent and buy food. There are also many students that struggle with more demanding

extracurriculars because of term time jobs. I have friends on varsity and club teams that have had to quit because they didn't have the time to commit to the sport and also work to pay the student contribution. It very much creates a division between those on financial aid and those that aren't. Those that are are limited in extracurricular opportunities because of this constraint compared to those students that don't have to constantly worry about making ends meet. Our financial aid system was one of the leaders ten years ago, but many other private institutions have caught up and are providing even MORE aid than Yale. Only 8% of our students qualify for Federal aid and those that do qualify STILL don't even get all the help they need, myself being one of them. This is compared to other schools that have 20% their students that qualify for federal aid and receive FULL aid as a result. If I was making the decision now, I think that Yale would not have been so high on my list as a result of this.

They are really slow at getting back to you, but I imagine it's because of the number of students applying for FA.

need more \$\$\$

Yes, I would really appreciate more outside scholarship resources. In addition, it would be nice to have more 'job training' workshop newsletters or some kind of bulletin announcing workshops for Microsoft Office Suite/Dreamweaver/programming, etc. to help students gain marketable skills for higher-paying positions.

The summer and student income contributions are a huge source of stress, and that stress is defining my experience at Yale.

One: make it less complicated. Two: eliminate term time jobs for a lot of students, who are more likely to struggle in school and also have to take on a job. You guys have \$24 billion in endowment; you can definitely spare cash for financial aid. Three: are you kidding me about not increasing aid for the new incoming students?! That's ridiculous! Four: eliminate the summer contribution. How are you supposed to make money and use your financial aid to go abroad? You can't! That eliminates so many options for financial aid students. Five: stop reducing aid as students get older. That's some tricky rudeness.

I don't think that receiving outside scholarships should reduce Yale financial aid--the point of applying for those outside scholarships is to receive MORE aid, not the same net amount as a result of the reduction in Yale financial aid.

it could take into account external factors other than just flat numbers. i also don't think yale should set the financial aid so that they leave you with just enough money to limp away and not destroy your family's financial situation. while yale is a great university and i'm very glad i came here and very grateful for the aid that allowed me to, i dont feel like yale fully understands what financial aid looks like from the families who really need it. there's no reason that yale needs to charge so much that students are taking out loans for their undergraduate, and yale knows many of us will follow with graduate school and what happens when we have literally zero savings then? in other terms, i dont think yale should be requiring students' families to sacrifice their quality of life just so that students should come here.

More transparent to students!

I wish the office would not only take a family's gross income into consideration, but also would consider where the money is going. As one of four children the financial aid process was difficult for my family and I because although our family's income is high, the distribution of the money means that there isn't much saved (we rent a house, pay for 4 private school tuitions, etc.)

The financial aid application asks us to describe potential changes to the previous year's income, then does not take any of that information into account when the application is processed. I understand the point of a financial aid review to ensure that the new numbers are real, but that should at the very least be an optional supplement offered immediately with the application instead of something we have to ask for after we are given a bill we can't afford.

I think it will be appreciated by other international students that the \$60,000 threshold as a basis of eligibility of full financial aid be stated on the website that it only applies to US citizens. I

would also appreciate financial aid officers to have no presumptions about international students that they all have rich parents.

There needs to be transparency and the fact that they say you don't have to take out a loan is a complete lie the first thing they told me when I didn't have enough money to pay one semester they told me take out a loan that's completely hypocritical and bs

More loan options.

Yes - given the incredible resources of this university, it seems to contradict Yale's mission statement by having a two-tier system where because of socioeconomic circumstance, some students have to work during term time, and some do not. If I didn't have work commitments, I could easily take on another class, devote more time to research, or other extracurricular activities. While all students are immensely grateful for the generosity of the university's financial aid, the summer time and term time commitments can be very difficult for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to deal with. It also means that if I am interested in doing summer scientific research, I will find it very hard to fund the summer income contribution (I'm an international student - so this doesn't apply directly to me, but there are 14% taxes on scholarship above tuition, which is roughly equivalent in size).

NO LIMIT ON OUTSIDE SCHOLARSHIPS. SO RIDICULOUS THAT THE PEOPLE WHO WORK HARD TO APPLY GET THAT MONEY TAKEN AWAY IF THEY RECEIVE "OVER THE LIMIT."

Yes, I actually believe the term-time student contribution is fair. I think it could be lower, but I think in principle the concept is okay. However, I take serious issue with the summer contribution, because it severely limits my summer opportunities such that it's not feasible for me to get an unpaid summer internship because not making money actually means going into debt by amounts up to \$10,000, especially for internships where you need to pay for your own housing. I think this summer contribution needs to be eliminated entirely especially for students with little to no access to viable summer work that would pay enough to cover this contribution. I do not think the SIC is very fair. Some students work for investment banks and make over \$10,000 in a summer. I, and many others, however, am interested in pursuing careers that are not nearly as high paying. And in order to gain experience in that field, most opportunities require me to not only volunteer my time, but pay for my cost of living over the summer. Therefore, I do not think it is fair to expect me to be able to pay the same amount of SIC as someone who earned much more than I did, even though I was pursuing a summer activity that would further my own academic and professional pursuits.

Make it more transparent. Take into account the living standards of people, not just what it looks like on paper. Do they live outside the United States? Is money earned in a foreign currency? What is the standard of living in these foreign countries? The age of the parents and their ability to work beyond physical.

More information should be provided to students and their families, but provided in a way that is clear and not overwhelming.

It should be clearer from the beginning what my family will owe.

The fact that student income contribution goes up every year is not advertised and not well explained by the university. They need to get rid of this awful policy to hide the real cost of the student income contribution so that students can make an informed decision. I'm well aware of it now, but was not when I applied or committed.

Yes. Perhaps the expected self-help. I find it unfair that some students with families who have no means to help them finance their education (this means tuition, room & board, transportation, books, social needs [which is overlooked]) have to take one more than one job during the school year just to pay for necessities. Unlike their most of their peers, they have no leftover money to enjoy the luxury of worrying just about their academics and social life. They have to worry about how they're going to pay for their expected contribution, housing essentials, New Haven essentials, Yale Special events. And even if they have two jobs, they often have to

sacrifice buying or even renting books, to borrowing books that they can't annotate or to skipping out on some amazing Yale Community events because that money is needed to pay for basic school supplies or a winter jacket.

1) Yale students should be able to apply for summer fellowships that cover the cost of the Summer Income Contribution 2) Yale should waive the Summer Income Contribution for students who demonstrate they are engaged with an internship, research, or study over the summer (like many other Ivy Leagues do) 3) The Student Income Contribution should be eliminated during the semester so that all students can decide their level of extracurricular and academic engagement 4) Student jobs should be guaranteed to students on financial aid 5) If it must exist, the student income contribution should be attainable on under 5 hours of work per week 6) Yale should actually guarantee that no students leave with loans

The student effort can be very very difficult to meet, and it is certainly a source of financial stress. I would like to see more options to fulfill this and/or a reduction of this.

Student contribution should not rise over the course of your 4 years.

I would lower the work study or summer contribution.

Make the deadlines known. Send out emails when the deadlines are approaching. Hire people that will not make you feel like an idiot for calling the financial aid office asking for help.

If you make the poor kids work, make the rich kids work too.

please get rid of the student income contribution, I have no way of making that money and am very worried about having to take out loans. My family is unable to afford my contribution unlike other students. Also, working takes off time from my school work and I feel that if I could use the time that I spend at work or looking for a job then I could get better grades and improve my studies.

More clarity. It took me a while to figure out the difference between the YPP and E-bill and how things worked.

Make it more student-friendly. It is difficult for everybody to have to reach out on their own only to get no results.

The Financial Aid award process was difficult for me and my family as American expats who moved back to the United States during my time at Yale. While we were abroad, my father's company (the US Government) paid for our education at an English-language school, in addition to significant host-country employment taxes, which legally must appear as income on my family's tax return even though we never saw a dime of this money. However, the Yale Financial Aid office did not take the nature of this additional "income" into account when evaluating our financial aid application, even though MIT, where my sister attends college, was more accommodating of this circumstance.

Yale needs to be more transparent about the SIC, work study offerings, and that "loan-free" doesn't actually mean that.

Help us find term and summer jobs if there is a student contribution requirement. I've not heard back from any student job applications although I am more than willing to work. It is also extremely difficult to find paying summer jobs that accept those with my major and class standing. Being able to read 3 ancient languages means nothing in terms of paying internships compared to knowing 3 programming languages. This student contribution needs to be better looked after.

Yale should use its endowment more aggressively to fund tuition fees for students. No person who earns admission to this college college should feel intimidated by the finances, let alone feel like they can't go to Yale for monetary reasons.

Instead of raising parent contribution as tuition rises, it would be nice if Yale could offer student loans to international students.

More clarity, the financial aid office is not always clear about what it offers to students with high need. For example, they often do cover the health insurance each semester but do not make it clear that they do, requiring a lot of very annoying bureaucracy figuring out if my parents will or

will not have to pay an extra \$1000 each semester

I wish it was more clear about what they are charging you for, what can be waived, what cannot be waived, and what you are expected to pay when.

Take into consideration the cost of living in certain places, as well as monthly utility expenses. I've been (rudely) told by financial aid that where I live is a "choice" and my family could always move somewhere with a lower cost of living. Please take into consideration the fact that where we live is dependent on many things: where our parents work, nearby family we have to take care of, etc. Our lives and the lives of our family members are built around the communities we live in. Stop looking at the numbers and see the whole picture, even if it means filling out more forms and understanding how much money each family is actually left with at the end of the day. I am a senior, and my student loan status right now is ridiculous because of these policies. We barely make it by with interest payments, and if I had known this is how things would be, I would not have decided to go to Yale.

The financial aid process for me was actually pretty efficient and easy to complete. Yes, there were many forms to submit particular deadlines to meet, but in the end, everything worked out well.

more money plz. easier ability to opt out of student activity fee

Yale's financial aid process can be quite difficult to complete. Some of the paperwork's directions are vague in their description on how to fill it out and turn it in. I would change this by using clear language and possibly creating paperwork in various languages so parents, many of whom this information comes from, can better help out with this process.

A one on one meeting with my financial aid officer would clarify the process a great deal.

There seems to be very little talk of financial aid once you are admitted into the school. It's a bit ridiculous how much students don't know about financial aid here, and the administration should be ashamed of that fact. They pretend like money isn't an issue and talk about it in very hush hush terms. It boasts that it covers 100% of student "need" while deciding themselves what a student's family "needs". How crazy is it that a university with an endowment of 23 BILLION dollars makes first-generation, lower class college students take out thousands of dollars in loans? It's disgusting. For a student like myself to be able to cover the summer contribution my options are either a) get a loan or b) work in finance. Yale has not done nearly enough to level the playing field for students who don't come from incredibly wealthy families. I am grateful that I came here and I am grateful for all of the support this University has given me. I wouldn't find this support anywhere else, but the truth of the matter is that Yale can and should do so much more.

I understand the necessity and value of paying for part of my education and therefore understand the reason for my contribution. However, being a varsity athlete chips away at the available time I have to get a term time job. The jobs that are available are mostly jobs that need to be done during the hours of my practices and competitions which makes it difficult for me to find a job that can fit within my schedule. Obviously I am not asking for the university to cater to my every need but it would be helpful to know about jobs that I could do in conjunction with my hectic schedule.

No

I think that The process is slow, which means that it can't adapt to family changes quickly. This hurts a lot of students when their situations at home change.

I don't think it is fair for students to have to contribute money from summer jobs. Students save money from summer jobs for other college expenses other than tuition. Yale looks at past student income and thinks, "Oh. They have money in savings. Let's take some of it."

One of my friends told me yesterday that it actually doesn't make sense for us to get paid jobs over the summer since most of that income will just lessen our financial aid award for the year to come. This seems backwards and wrong to me.

The application process is confusing and hard to navigate on the school website. It is very

difficult to find a set of terms and a list of dates/requirements in order to apply for and receive financial aid

Expand the ISA program Additional subsidy for students who have demonstrated financial need, like Yale subsidizes an additional \$3.00/hour for a student working a \$12/hour on campus job

I would like all of the scholarships that I've earned to go towards my student contribution and my family contribution, not towards Yale's.

Yes. As well as the initial financial aid award freshman year, there should be a rough estimate or explanation of how that financial aid would change. I suddenly went from having to pay \$13,000 a year to \$35,000 a year, which has put a huge financial burden on me and my family. The financial aid office's explanation was that my brother had graduated. It makes no sense though that now that my brother has graduated, my mother would have to pay for my education as though my brother were still in school. It's as though she's being punished for getting a child through college. That kind of change in financial aid needs to be mentioned because I definitely would not have come here if I had known that I'd go into so much debt trying to pay for school. Yes, I can work a term-time job but I'm working between 10 and 19 hours a week and still can't make enough money to pay for school. Also, the financial aid office advertises their one goal as being making sure that students don't have to take out loans. More effort to stick to that promise, especially when a student walks into the financial aid office with a payment plan and demonstrates that they need to take out loans, would be nice.

I'm completely in favor of eliminating the student income contribution. I think it's pretty tough on students who have summer jobs and need to support themselves over the summer, while Yale decides to take whatever's left over and then some for tuition. I personally am lucky because my \$0 family contribution allows my family to help pay for my student income contribution, but that's not a guarantee for some students and some families.

Get rid of the student work contribution. It's simply unfair.

Yale should provide greater clarification on the financial aid process by giving a case study/example of anonymous or fictitious students from different financial situations. In these stories, Yale should explain what students that fit each archetype are expected to do, and/or they should provide common alternative methods that students have used to fund their education.

The financial aid office needs to understand the differences in standards of living, particularly for African students where parental incomes may seem high but do not translate well into dollar amounts because of the different purchasing powers, standards of living and brutal exchange rates. Financial aid for international students must be tailored to regions to account for the multitude of different international systems that ALWAYS cause major problems during the application process. It does not help to give international applicants the same financial aid forms as American students because it only causes mistakes, misunderstandings and lower levels of clarity.

Don't have a gigantic increase in student contribution after freshman year Better resources and priority for FA recipients to get on-campus jobs. Not that hard.

Eli Whitney Students are not guaranteed the same access to aid as other Yale undergraduates. The Yale FINANCIAL AID office takes our FSEOG grants and reduces our scholarship money to mitigate the cost of the program.

While this is a totally unrealistic request, I wish I didn't get f*cked over by my father refusing to pay more than a certain amount of the cost of attendance. The fact that the highest category for the "Approximately how much do you expect to take out in student loans by the time of your graduation from Yale College?" question is ">\$20,000" is disturbing to me when I'm likely going to be ~\$40,000 in debt by graduation. The student income contribution is \$4,600, and I'm paying \$19,500... I can't even afford to go to a show once a week or even buy a f*cking box of Cheez-Itz while my roommates are regularly buying >\$20 meals instead of going to the dining hall. I literally have not bought a single snack since I've gotten here... My experience is an outlier, no

doubt. But there's a serious issue in this country's financial aid policies when my parents' income and their refusal to meet the level of payment that that income corresponds to f*cks a hard-working student over. Do I expect Yale to change its policies and ignore my parents' income? Absolutely not, and it'd be ludicrous to expect Yale to be able to afford that. sorry for the rant, I just need to let this out because as far as I know, no one I know here in as bad of a financial position as I am and it really bothers me when ">\$20,000" in student loans is seen as an absurd amount to the Yale student body

There is an extreme amount of information to keep track of and it is very difficult to determine which information applies to one specific situation; making the process more clear would be helpful.

Student contribution when you are playing a sport. Athletes already devote at least 40 hours of time per week to their sport with practice, film, conditioning, lift, TRAVELLING. It's very unreasonable to ask them to compete for your school while also paying a student income contribution. In my opinion, competing for Yale should be the contribution.

I have international student friends who are less well-off than myself who go over a year without seeing their families. Returning home allows students to process their experience at Yale and think about how to reconcile their goals prior to arriving at Yale with the opportunities and challenges they experience in being at Yale. While I do not object to student's being expected to work on campus, I think that financial aid should be enough to cover plane tickets for visiting family at least once a year.

I wish that the people at the office we more friendly and willing to explain even the smallest things that may seem obvious but can sometimes be confusing. There have been times when I've been on the phone with women at the office and they seem curt and rude on the phone when I'm simply trying to understand the complex process that is financial aid. Granted, there have been very hospitable people, but I have spoken with many more impatient people than I would have liked. One the whole though, I don't have very many complaints about the financial aid office/process, they are one of the things that has made my education at Yale possible.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	284

31. Do you have any other comments?

Text Response

My financial aid package has opened endless doors to me and I am extremely grateful for it. Please continue to prioritize this most important program. In particular, increases to the student contribution can pose serious difficulty for students and make it very difficult to pursue unpaid summer opportunities that are vital to your interests and future career. Please do not increase these further.

Yale has more than enough funds to provide FREE education for most, if not all, of its students. It should implement free tuition immediately, or at the very least eliminate the student income contribution.

My parents aren't helping me with college, so because of the expected family contribution I am taking out more than \$80,000 in loans. I know I will be able to pay for it, but I feel limited to only looking for really lucrative jobs when I graduate, and only jobs in fields that I do not ultimately plan to end up in. I feel like it is making me delay following my passions, and will make me unable to go to grad school for many years.

The student income contribution poses an equal burden on the Yale student body. Rich kids' parents just pay and poor ones can't do what they want (i.e. take unpaid internships) because they have to work.

There is no excuse for Yale's appalling current practices with regards to financial aid. They perpetuate entrenched injustices and institute an unjust power dynamic. Remake the system to be simple and generous. Yale's financial health will not suffer and its students and community goodwill will benefit enormously.

I appreciate the separate calculations for divorced parents

It would be helpful if the financial aid office could respond to our concerns in a timely manner.

My situation wasn't sorted out until very close to the payment deadline, and that causes a lot of anxiety.

Hello! Thank you for making Yale feasible for me. If it weren't for financial aid I wouldn't have even applied to Yale. Kisses, A Grateful Student.

I wish the financial aid office was better at communicating with students. Every year I've applied, I've had problems getting my financial aid award, it really became exhausting. I would call the office and sometimes even got different answers or no answers from the employees.

No.

The student contribution is socioeconomically discriminatory. Especially considering that students from lower income families are usually already academically disadvantaged, having them take jobs during the school year only further harms them. Students from wealthier families can just have their parents pay the full amount, while students from other backgrounds do not have that option.

I think the financial aid process needs to be made a lot clearer to incoming students. I had no idea how to pay my bill or what certain expenses were for. There just seems to be a lot of gray area where the financial aid office is not conveying enough information.

I think things like volunteering and non-paid jobs (e.g. research assistance) should be considered jobs.

I do not think Yale gives as much financial aid as other Ivy Leagues and I think this is one downfall with the system.

no, please stop sending me emails

Thanks so much for compiling this information! Financial Aid is critical to my experience at Yale.

I received money from Yale this past summer from a summer program I was a part of, which granted me about \$2500 in income. First semester, Yale charged me \$1375 to pay for financial aid, and they did not supply me with funds to purchase books as they did last year, costing me

about another \$300. I searched for an on-campus job, but my attempts either did not work out or my hectic schedule this semester made it so I could not devote the time required for other opportunities. I did not make any money this past semester, and Yale is asking for another \$1375 contribution, meaning they payed me \$2500 during the summer only to ask for it back and more. Thankfully, I will be getting some aid for purchasing books this semester, but having to pay \$1375 all at once or risk having to take out a loan or get charged more by Yale is rather stressful. If there were some kind of option for a payment plan, as in every month or so some money was taken from my account until the charges were paid off with some interest, it would make managing my expenses much less taxing.

International students are given less financial aid than American students, and it should be changed. Yale should contribute more to the travels home of international students for Christmas.

nope

It is absurd that Yale, with its massive endowment, requires students to have jobs during the academic year. Many of its peer institutions do not. As a first-generation college student who comes from a low income family, I am inherently put at a disadvantage relative to my wealthy classmates. Furthermore, as a STEM student this limits my research opportunities during term time because not all principal investigators offer pay.

Something that wasn't included in the survey is the breakdown of where hours worked come from, e.g. working 2 campus jobs to total 15 hours.

Meal plan is ridiculously expensive given the hours dining halls are open. Much cheaper to be off the meal plan.

I fully support term-time student jobs -- they're a valuable part of our education. I do not, however, support the unequal expectation/requirement to have a student job based on financial need.

I believe the priority should be to abolish all student contributions included in the financial aid award. If University of Chicago can do it, so can we.

I really and deeply appreciate all that Yale has done for me, especially in terms of financial aid. However, I think Yale has a lot of improvement to make in terms of making it easier for low-income students to be successful here. Look to UChicago for a great example of what could be done! Sometimes I feel like Yale cares more about itself as an institution than it does about its students. Please, prove me wrong.

The financial aid department is often unhelpful and disrespectful. On a simple customer service level they are all very bad. Of the 8 schools that offered me aid, some with full rides, Yale's financial aid department was the rudest and most difficult to deal with.

nope

The student contribution is very high, especially given that, percentage-wise, it must be such a small part of Yale's income. I applied for more than 20 jobs this semester, and unable to secure one and watching applications get into the way of my work, I gave up and resolved to try again next semester. That means that this semester drained the rest of my life savings, reversed my plans to start a retirement account this year, and puts huge pressure on me find a job next term and a paid opportunity this summer.

I think the financial aid at Yale is spectacular and one of the things that makes it so great.

Why do you expect us to earn much more than is expected at peer institutions?

It is a very long and complicated process. Having communicated with the financial aid office all four years that I have been here, I still do NOT have a clear idea about how the outside scholarship policy works. I understand the basic framework (outside scholarships can replace student contribution but then replace Yale grant money) but never understood how this would sometimes affect my parental contribution and other times not. Overall I am VERY grateful for the financial aid that I have received and would not be able to afford college otherwise. I do know that my family has had to appeal aid decisions due to changing familial circumstances and

that it was a daunting process. Finally, Yale offered me one of the best aid packages which did influence my decision to come.

As someone who receives full financial aid from Yale, I find myself uncomfortable, for the most part, criticizing the financial aid process. After all, I'm getting a quarter-million dollar education - for free. I am thankful for the aid I have received in my time here, but I have to point out that it has been hard each semester to meet the work study requirement. Were it not for an outside scholarship I receive from my state, I would have had to take out loans. There simply isn't enough time in the day to work 10 hours a week and still keep up with class, research, and volunteering.

I have a single parent that is barely able to put aside any money for her retirement, so in order to help her I pay approximately 3/4 of my tuition myself. I don't understand how Yale can honestly advertise a "loan-free education", I already have 2 jobs and work the maximum hours allowed while in session (20), I have no doubt in my mind that I will have to take out substantial loans before I graduate. I am also a varsity athlete, so on top of the ~20hrs a week that I work, I also spend ~30-40hrs at practices/games/roadtrips. I struggle to keep up with the work load of classes due to the financial strain, I am not a member of any clubs due to a complete lack of free time, and I miss out on events that cost money because every penny I earn working goes to this school. I know that I am not the only student in this type of situation.

I have no way of making the student income contribution and because of it I find myself stressing out more and more.

I wish our outside scholarships could cover our parent's contribution. Why can't the scholarship money I earn help my family? Yale doesn't need those few thousand dollars...and they could really help at home.

The financial aid office should make it easier for international students on financial aid to find on campus jobs, because off campus jobs are not an option for international students. Freshman year I applied to at least 5 jobs that didn't require specific skills and was offered none. As a result my parents had to cover my student contribution even though I had every intention to work and try to pay for my own education.

more than anything, I have found my low socioeconomic background to prevent me from earning certain opportunities at Yale

The poor and rude treatment I've received from Yale Financial Aid office makes me way less inclined to give back to Yale (and to the financial aid office) in the future when I am financially able to do so.

Athletes cannot work during their seasons, and spend the semester they aren't in season taking their more difficult classes for their majors. This makes it very difficult to make any substantial amount of money during the school year, leaving summer the only time to accrue the money to pay the expected student contribution is during the summer when jobs at home are harder to get and the only time many athletes have the opportunity to study abroad.

I've spoken with upper-classmen who have told me that their Expected Student Contribution has increased considerably throughout their time at Yale. That, I think, is a daunting truth. It'd be nice if the ESC for students on financial aid was a little more consistent with respect to how their financial situation is on a yearly basis. The assumption/expectation that undergraduates will earn more money and have increased financial resources as their time at Yale progresses is slightly misleading. I may not know enough about this subject to elaborate on my initial thoughts, but as a freshman on financial aid, I can only begin to imagine what it is like to pay a significantly higher ESC. I guess that only time will tell.

I appreciate what Yale has offered me so far in terms of financial aid. However, I feel that in the coming years, I will have to work more to continue receiving the same benefits, something I am worried about because it might shift my attention away from my academics.

Thanks for taking the time to read this!

No

I don't think students shouldn't have jobs. I think students shouldn't have jobs to finance their education or other expenses like books, household goods etc. I think students should have jobs to finance their own desires, like off campus food, movies, etc.

I wish "need" included looking at the fact that my parents have to retire someday. They're eating up their retirement accounts to keep me here, and so while I'm not looking at tons of student loans, per say, I am looking ahead to having to help them financially after retirement and know that I am responsible for disrupting or delaying their desired retirement situation.

I think this is an important discussion, and I'm glad the YCC is bringing it up with the administration.

I appreciate the aid I received greatly, I just wish the process to apply for it was less confusing
Would not be at Yale without financial aid, very grateful

It's unfair that while Yale claims that students don't need to take out loans, those on financial aid can only fully participate in extracurricular life, summer opportunities, etc. if they take out loans. Finding jobs is difficult and my need to make money has interfered with my ability to take advantage of what Yale has to offer. Meanwhile, students without financial burdens can devote more time to their classes and clubs, giving them more leadership positions, better grades, and allowing them a wider range of summer opportunities.

It's amazing that the financial aid office has ISA and works so hard to let their students study abroad.

Financial aid policies currently discriminate against Eli Whitney Students.

Yale is obviously extremely generous with financial aid, but there are some students who receive awards that are a bit unrealistic. For example, some students whose families make less than \$15,000 per year have student income contributions of about \$3000 or \$4000. While this would not be especially difficult to earn, getting jobs in this economy has proven to be very difficult, particularly during the summer. Other students whose families make more money face similar difficulties, so it is not a problem that is restricted to low-income students.

Financial Aid is fantastic at Yale for those who need it and much better than nearly every school across the country. I believe that taking out student loans is completely fine if they are reasonable (under \$15,000-\$20,000) and I would be happy to take out some small student loans if I had too. Fortunately, people who are actually middle class and lower at Yale hardly ever have to take out a large loan because of financial aid and people who are upper middle class and above generally have parents who pay for their education.

In spite of difficulty in calculating it, financial aid awards should factor in cost of living based on family's location.

The financial aid office does not provide financial aid packages for anything other than quantitative results from forms such as the FAFSA, they fail to recognize extenuating circumstances that are not demonstrated on tax returns and W2 forms.

Overall grateful. Thank you!

Tuition is incredibly high and continues to rise every year. This is a terrible and unnecessary burden on students and their families.

The expected student contributions make things very limiting. It is difficult to work enough hours in my week while balancing 5.5 credits and a myriad of extracurricular activities, but I need that money to afford going here without taking out loans. As for the summer contribution, I need a place where I am making substantial amounts of money or else I cannot afford it. Meanwhile the Career Services offices provide information on internships that pay little to no money. It creates an extremely difficult processes whereby I have denied multiple summer offers simply because I needed to earn money to pay for Yale.

See above

For international students, Yale Health should be considered in the financial aid package!!! I'm Canadian and had no other health care options!

I have no outside scholarships because of my middle class status. I am stuck and only have my

own resources to secure funds from which is my long-time savings and my jobs - a majority of all my money is going to help my parents pay next semester's bill and to pay my summer contributions.

Financial aid is the main reason I can afford a Yale education and I am thankful for it.

Please rethink the summer income contribution. For many people, summer activities are the most important thing that affects where people go after college. The summer contribution severely restricts lower income students.

The student contribution should be eliminated, and the requirement to work on campus to pay for that should also be eliminated. It isn't particularly easy to find a job as it is, and in addition the students who need to work to finance their education are much more likely to be at a disadvantage for a number of other reasons, such as having to send money home. It greatly affects student well being and it is another stressor. Yale has sufficient funds to comfortably eliminate this stress for students.

Surplus money should be given by Yale to the student. So for example let's say my student contribution is \$3000, and I have outside scholarships totaling \$5000. Then the extra \$2000 should be given to ME, not Yale. Otherwise, there's no incentive for the student to go out and secure additional scholarships.

The financial aid office here has been nothing but amazing since even before I stepped foot at Yale. They might be a bit slow at communicating with outside scholarship agencies, but they are always able to resolve everything and are incredibly helpful.

Though my summer opportunities have not been limited by my term time job, they have been limited in other ways. For example, students who receive financial aid are eligible for one International Summer Award during their time at Yale. Having used mine, I can no longer use that resource to take classes abroad in the summer whereas some students do not face the barrier of funding. Also, I needed to take two courses during the summer to complete premedical and major requirements. If you are on financial aid, the financial aid office will pay for up to half of one credit of coursework. Therefore, in order to finance my studies, I had to work as a summer session counselor (which paid for 1 course credit) and work an additional 15 hours per week to finance the last one quarter of the two credits of coursework that I needed. The time that I spent in these jobs greatly impacted my quality of life as I attempted to take one years worth of organic chemistry in a ten week period.

eliminate or significantly reduce student contribution for students on full financial aid

I am an athlete so therefore, the student contribution is difficult to meet by working (both at Yale and during breaks) because of my athletic commitment and the tremendous amount of time that requires.

Student income contribution is a huge issue. WHY?! let's be real. it makes shit super hard for low-income students.

Considering the variation in socioeconomic backgrounds of students, some students do not have to work jobs to pay student contributions, since their families cover them for them. This causes an imbalance in opportunities between higher and lower class citizens because those who work are using valuable time that could be used for studying, schoolwork, or extra curriculars, which their higher class classmates do not have to worry about.

The worst part of my Yale experience is feeling guilty about how much it costs my parents.

Yale's Financial Aid is a piece of shit. My family had to take out a second mortgage on our house just to pay for school. Instead of doing something I'm more passionate about, I'm now pressured to find a high paying job so my family doesn't go bankrupt. Reflecting on my experience after almost 4 years at Yale, it's absolutely not worth my family killing themselves trying to pay for.

The incredibly generous Yale financial aid package I was offered in my freshman year was an enormous blessing to my family and the deciding factor in me coming to Yale. While the financial aid offered in my sophomore year was less, I am still very grateful to the financial aid

office at Yale. Thank you.

I am happy to be at Yale, but have been disappointed to find out that Yale's "no-loan" initiative is a myth that does not support lower-middle class students whose families make just about the total tuition cover cut-off point. I have been forced to take out maximum loans each semester in addition to holding two jobs just to try and make enough to meet the tuition cost set irrationally far above my family's real ability to pay. Yale desperately needs to reform the way that it supports one-parent families.

Please help SUN in its fight to get rid of the student contribution. It's ridiculous and creates problems for only low income students.

Ideally, the financial aid system should be reversed. Make the normal amount for tuition be \$0, and then ask more from the exceptionally wealthy. Especially since Yale has \$20 billion in the bank, there has got to be a way to make it so that people whose families don't make 6 figures don't feel like they're begging on their hands and knees for Yale's beneficence. Every time a message comes from Financial Aid, my mother jokes, "What do they want now, a vial of my blood?" That feeling is real, and Yale should be sensitive to it, especially if they hope to move away from their past as an institution for rich, white, New England prep-school boys.

Thanks for doing this! I think Yale has made great strides in supporting low-income students and is probably one of the best schools that a low-income student can attend. But obviously this is not everyone's experience and there are improvements to be made. Also, I've heard that apparently Yale does not consider changes in income that occur during the academic year for that same year's tuition.

I really think that a university requiring a student income contribution should guarantee that its students have paid summer opportunities on campus. I also think that Yale should respect a student's decision not to have an on-campus job if she would rather focus on her academics because of Yale's character as an academic institution.

THEY CHANGED THEIR POLICIES THIS YEAR WITHOUT TELLING US. Travel allowance is now disbursed directly to the account and no longer untouched which means hallelujah i have no travel allowance for the fall and vacation allowance was automatically disbursed to my account DESPITE going in and telling them and I didn't want that to happen and also writing to them. Seriously.

If we have a \$51 million surplus some of that can surely go into lowering costs for undergrad students to attend. Cost of tuition and room & board have definitely increased above inflation. Also, expectation of students having a term-time job definitely makes an unspoken gradient between students who do and do not have to dedicate part of their time at Yale working for pay. I think that within certain income brackets, the student contribution should be reduced or eliminated

There should be more help finding scholarships.

Yale gave me a very generous financial aid package, but not so generous that it was easy on my parents. Money has been very difficult for us to manage while at Yale. Expecting students to earn money while in school is not unreasonable, what's unreasonable is the number of hours one would have to work to pay for the student contribution alone. There's also little consideration into how money needs to be spent by students- late night coffee because of unreasonable work loads, buying clothes because you've outgrown what you wore in high school, buying plane tickets home, it's all really difficult to manage. I feel like if Yale had just added \$5000 to my package, college would have been an easier time financially. Summers have always been hard because I've seen wealthier students take amazing unpaid internships while I had to work boring campus jobs over the summer because I couldn't afford to go anywhere else, even if the jobs were paid.

The summer income contribution prevents lower-income students from partaking in unpaid internships, even if they are in their field of interest

I might be somewhat of a statistical outlier. I usually hold 4~6 on campus jobs during the term

time, totaling around 18~19 hrs a week, and as an international student, I am not allowed to work off campus term-time otherwise I would. (I am taking a gap semester now, that's why I have off campus term-time job currently.) The reason I work so much is that I am also earning the family contribution part of my FA package--this might not be true across the board. I do know other friends who enjoys their FA package but also have difficult family situations.

Yale financial aid isn't perfect, but it's very good, and has always been good by me. The student income contribution is a good idea at heart, but term-time jobs do really cut a chunk out of the Yale experience, so having more options for students to earn the money during the summer could be really helpful. The national and international bulldogs work programs seem like an excellent option here, but perhaps a greater waiver accessibility for students who want to take classes at Yale or take an unpaid internship would be helpful. Since no questions mentioned it, I also feel the need to point out how incredibly reasonable Yale is to its off-campus students; many universities seriously slash aid to people who live off-campus, which would really hurt me personally.

Yale is very unclear in its advertisements to prospective students about financial aid. It requires students and families to dip much further into personal equity than peer institutions (such as Harvard and Princeton) and consistently claims that financial aid is a "no loans" program. I have been told multiple times by the Office of Financial Aid that this is incorrect, and that the policy is "no loans for students, unless they want to take them out to cover their term-time / summer / personal income / assets" contributions. The amount that I have been required to pay has increased drastically every year, and has placed significant financial hardship on my family, as well as myself. Constant fighting with the financial aid office has been one of the most difficult aspects of my Yale experience.

That being said, thank you so much for the financial aid system, which makes it possible for me to study here!!

Yale is not geared toward finding students from poor families. The help given is often also in the form of reimbursements - this does not help if you do not have the money in the first place. The tax imposed in international students is incredibly constricting, making attending here very difficult. If I knew about all the hidden costs of attending university here I may have reconsidered my decision to attend.

Thanks for the aid that I do get. My family would, quite frankly, be entirely screwed without it. Some of my answers would change based on how disproportionately these policies affect low-income students.

Yale's financial aid is extremely generous and enables many students to have many opportunities they wouldn't have otherwise. Financial pressure negatively affects students' abilities to participate in extra-curricular opportunities on campus and limits summer opportunities in a way that unfairly targets students who come from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

If a student is smart enough to attend Yale, he is surely smart enough and qualified enough to pursue, seek out, and attain outside scholarships to cover the very reasonable student income contribution. I did. Yale is more than generous when it comes to making it a world-class education affordable to everyone.

It would be nice for them for spell out federal aid and its distribution in addition to regular Yale aid. There are little to no resources of information about this and many students qualify for Pell Grants, which are most often written out directly to students and on a per-semester basis. However Yale doesn't tell students this specifically themselves in any form, especially not in financial aid letters...

I believe that the student income contribution places an unfair burden on students from the lowest socioeconomic classes. Personally, it has not been a problem for me because my family is able to pay. I can keep my earnings from my job. However, I was not able to find a job my first semester and would not be making enough to pay for it through my job alone. If my family was

not able to pay, the student income contribution would be a huge burden for me, as I know it is for some other students. I also do not believe that families should be expected to take out loans because Yale advertises financial aid as meeting full need.

I received more from Harvard than from Yale, so if it came down to finances, I would have chosen Harvard (also since I live in MA). I was a little disappointed that Yale couldn't exactly match my financial aid offer from Harvard.

My family and I are extremely grateful that the financial aid board reconsidered our accounts after a shift in assets was mistakenly marked as income, lowering the amount that my parents (one of whom is retired) needed to pay for this year.

Get rid of the student income contribution!

\$20 billion endowment should mean that no student should have to take out loans to pay for Yale.

I think my financial aid award was extremely generous. That being said, the one part that was unreasonable was my expected summer earnings--they were projected at almost twice what I earned at my job this summer where I worked a 40 hour week for two months of the summer. Some students are able to work in labs or other places that pay well, but if they're going to ask for money from summer earnings, they need to be more realistic about what a typical summer job pays.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	153