The YCC
Campus Safety Report

Yale College Council

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Introduction

The Yale College Council (YCC) has created the following report to gather undergraduate student body opinion about campus safety. The report contains a synthesis of student input on various aspects of campus safety—lighting and safety infrastructure, safety services, and alcohol policy. The report also intends to present suggestions from the undergraduate student body to improve campus safety.

The following report represents the voice of the Yale undergraduate student body, not the specific opinions of the YCC or any of its members.

Process

The Yale College Council used the following sources to solicit student feedback on campus safety:

- Online Form: Students could submit ideas for campus safety on an online form located on the Yale College Council website under Safety@Yale. This form included four write-in questions. (See Appendix A: Ideas on How To Improve Campus Safety?)

- Crowdsourcing: On November 13, 2012, the Yale College Council created a Google Doc open to all undergraduates to edit with their suggestions. YCC members monitored the Document. Up to 50 students could edit the document at any given time (See Appendix B).

- Lighting Patrol: On December 1, 2012 from 7:00 P.M. to 8:45 P.M., YCC Associate Member Andrew Grass (JE ’16) and Freshman Class Council Members Michael Leopold (MC ’16) and Vicky Chou (BK ’16) investigated areas where students reported poor lighting. The team documented any broken lights or areas where lighting was sub-par.
Lighting and Safety Infrastructure

The biggest concern that students had regarding student safety dealt with inadequate lighting around campus.

**Student-Reported Lighting Problems (See Figure 1):**

- Temple Street (in front of TD)
- Wall Street (next to Silliman)
- Dwight Street between Edgewood and Elm
- Ashmun Street
- York Street (in front of Davenport and Pierson)
- High Street and Crown Street Corner
- Sachem Street by Ingalls Rink (“The Whale”)
- Grove Street to Tower Parkway
- Chapel Street, west of Park Street
- Prospect Street
- Hillhouse Avenue
- Around Boyd Hall (“Swing Space”)

**Lighting Problems Recorded by Further Investigation:**

Lights Out

- Across from Basta on Chapel Street
- Across from Union League on Chapel Street
- On Crown Street and High Street corner
- Crown between High Street and York Street needs more lights
- In front of and across from Hull’s Art Supplies on Chapel Street
- Across from The Study on Chapel Street
- Corner of Chapel Street and Howe Street
- In front of Pierson across from Saybrook on York Street
- Davenport light is out next to entrance
- Jean Pope Memorial Park next to Grove Street has three lights out.
- Corner of Grove Street and Law School, near the Cemetery
- Three lights out on Hillhouse Avenue and Sachem Street corner
- By Hillhouse Avenue bridge
- On corner of Hillhouse Avenue and Grove Street
- Two lights out on Wall Street and Temple Street corner
- Blue light turned off by Slifka on Wall Street
• In front of Wall Street Pizza on Wall Street
• Three lights out on College Street next to Cross Campus
• Three lights out by Battell Chapel on Elm Street and College Street corner

Flickering Lights
• Flickering light on Howe Street and Edgewood Avenue corner
• Three lights flickering behind Pierson (around Edgewood Avenue and Lynwood Avenue)
• Flickering light next to 16 Edgewood Avenue
• Park Street and Edgewood Avenue
• Two lights flickering by Slifka on Wall Street

Other
• Trumbull Street and Prospect Street corner is dark
• Sachem lighting is subpar
• Ashmun Street and Tower Parkway area is very dark
• Blue phone behind Pierson is not too well-lit
• Dwight Street and Elm Street corner has good lighting
• Corner of Edgewood Avenue and Dwight Street is very dark, only one light on the entire corner

Dwight Street
• Dwight Street is very dark
• Corner of Dwight Street and Chapel Street is well-lit
• Need more lights behind Pierson

Other Infrastructure Recommendations
• Add Grove Street and Temple Street Intersection crosswalk
Figure 1: YCC Campus Safety Map Incident Locations and Reported Lighting Problems.

Incidence emails from Chief Higgins – From 2012-2013 school year – Locations of crimes
1) 09/6/12 – 12:30 AM – Phone Stolen – Prospect St.
2) 11/25/12 – 10:20 PM – Wallet Stolen – In the area of Edgewood Ave. and Lynwood Pl.
3) 09/8/12 – 2:10 AM – Phone Stolen – North Frontage Rd. and Lynwood Pl.
4) 9/25/12 – 9:10 PM – Robbery at gunpoint – Dwight St. and George St.
5) 10/6/2012 – 4:50 PM – Assault – Canal Line at Munson St.
6) 10/9/12 – 8:30 PM – Wallet Stolen – Mansfeld St. and Compton St.
7) 10/13/12 – 11:45 AM – Robbery – 175 Dwight St.
8) 11/21/2012 – 1:20 PM – iPod Stolen – Canal Line at Munson St.
Safety Services

The three most commented categories were Safety Rides, Officer Presence, and New Resources.

Safety Rides/Escorts

Many students comment that the security safe rides and shuttle services are “[some] of the best security resources”, but express a desire to improve the response times of the rides. Most responses concern long wait times for shuttles and security rides that forced students to wait outside in the dark where they felt unsafe. Several students also write that the long wait times encouraged them to “walk instead, despite the time and location.”

Specific Suggestions Include:

- **Increasing the number of vehicles and rides to improve response time.** The main concern with the shuttle system is wait times that can take “30 minutes plus”. As noted above, the long wait times could cause students to wait in unsafe areas or forgo the service and walk instead. Students also report problems with calling for a security ride near a shuttle stop. As one student writes, “If you’re even remotely close to a shuttle stop, they won’t dispatch a ride for you, even if the next bus won’t be arriving for 30 minutes and you’re all alone near a parking garage on Science Hill.” More vehicles could allow the security rides to pick up these students as well.

- **Moving the start time for shuttle rides before 6:00 P.M. during the fall and winter.** The Nighttime Safe Rides and Walking Escort Service runs from 6:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M. (Yale University Public Safety). Several students write that since it gets dark before 6:00 P.M. during much of the fall and winter, they could not use the shuttle service after class and felt unsafe walking.

- **Aligning the call system for door-to-door pick-ups with actual arrival time instead of predicated arrival time.** Two students note that the “glitch and inaccurate” system to tell students when to come to the shuttle caused them to wait outside in the dark for “10 to 15 minutes”. They suggest calling the student when the shuttle arrived, instead of calling based on a predicated arrival.

- **Aligning the Blue Route shuttle with arriving Amtrak and MetroNorth trains.** Several students report that the Yale Shuttle would arrive at Union Station
when incoming trains arrived, but would leave before students could get outside. This resulted in students “being stranded outside Union Station at night.”

- **Scheduling security rides in advance for groups.** One student suggests that groups should be able to schedule security rides in advance. The student notes that many clubs that meet late at night on a weekly basis could pre-schedule security pick-ups. The current problem is “if rides have to be scheduled after late-night meetings end, most people just walk home in the dark”. As the student writes, “If rides could be scheduled in advance by student groups who know they will finish a meeting at a certain time, all members of the group could get safe rides home and not need to walk alone in separate directions. This might also be more efficient than members of the group calling individual security cars or escorts.” Another student adds that the option for scheduling pick-ups for groups could also be used for groups arriving at Union Station.

**Officer Presence**

The other most frequently suggested service is increased officer presence. Students would like more officers in the following areas:

- Old Campus
- Boyd Hall (“Swing Space”)
- Wall Street
- Areas just off-campus such as behind Pierson
- Around Ingalls Rink (“The Whale”), especially Mansfield Street and Winchester Street
- Lock Street

**New Resources**

Students also suggest several new resources involving educating the Yale Community. One student would like to have an informational safety meeting for Off Campus Students. Another student asks for workshops with the Yale Police Department where students could register laptops and bikes in person.
Alcohol Safety

Many students express concerns about alcohol safety on campus. Some students reported feeling unsafe due to increased dangerous drinking behaviors. Other students commented that an apparent change to stricter alcohol policy is causing people to be less likely to seek help.

Specific Comments Include (See Appendix A and B for all comments):

- “The new alcohol policy's focus on punishment instead of student health is worrisome because it may encourage students to stay in their rooms instead of seeking hospitalization / help when necessary. Also, just as students may tune out the administration’s conversations about sex when sex is only portrayed as negative, students may tune out a predominantly negative alcohol policy. Positive models of both these activities should be promoted along with the dangers.”

- “The over-presence of alcohol on campus is a safety concern. Often times, I’m uncomfortable to venture out on a Friday/Saturday night and people who are drunk or throwing up often try to barge into other people’s suites. I truly think that alcohol presence should be limited.”

- “Do not ask kids where they got their alcohol at DUH and YNH. The vast majority of kids who go to DUH go because they take shots pre-gaming. But the result [of the policy] is that it prevents us from being able to call for help for a kid that needs it.”

- “Create disciplinary amnesty for anybody who willingly goes to Yale Health, so that people are inclined to call for help, not just ignore it. If YPD does not enforce alcohol (they raided Durfee and L-Dub last year on Old Campus, and I’ve heard that they’ve intervened in other dorms), Yale students will be less inclined to see YPD as a threat and more inclined to see YPD as a safety resource.”
Appendix A: Ideas on How To Improve Campus Safety?
Questions and Responses

The following are direct student responses to our online form on Campus Safety, which asked 4 questions to students about problem areas and viability of police resources.

“1. Concerns about Campus Safety or Off-Campus Safety?”

Lighting:

“More lighting on Temple St. in between the front of Timothy Dwight College, and also more lighting on Wall St. on the sidewalk next to Silliman College.”

"Ashmum Street is relatively poorly lit, especially along the side with the cemetery. It can feel a little unsafe and I know at least one friend who got robbed on that street. There is also very little police presence there. “

"The lights seem to turn on and off all the time along York Street in front of Davenport and Pierson. You can be walking a long the street and all of the sudden, the lights will go out. These lights should be left on permanently at night.”

“In all reality, the street light at the corner of high and crown has been out for months. It’d make me feel safer if that could be fixed as somebody who lives off-campus"

“Lighting on York Street between Chapel and Elm often flickers on and off.”

“There need to be better running paths that have blue lights along them. Behind the gym there is the pretty paved path that goes into the neighbourhoods which has a few blue lights, but there need to be more. It is very hard to run around campus without running circles around 'safe places' so it would be nice to invest into some well lit, well secured running routes.”

“Wall Street quite dark for those of us living in TD and the side of Silliman. Cross Campus could also do with more lighting. There could be more crosswalks because not all the drivers obey the laws.”

“Lights up Prospect St turn off randomly at night and are often too far apart, leaving dark areas along the walk from CEID or CSSSI to central campus.”
"Wall Street alongside Silliman can use better lighting, I think. Lock Street could use more on-foot security patrols (even though it is well-lit, and not very sketchy). The area behind Pierson/Davenport (Edgewood area) has similar issues."

“Lighting on the New Haven Green can/should be improved, but I don’t think that this is something that relates strongly to YCC.”

**Timing of Stoplights:**

“The intersection of Trumbull St and Temple St is dangerous for pedestrians because a number of the ‘walk’ signals turn on at the same times when cars coming from behind are right-turning and driving over the crosswalk. The combination of an inattentive pedestrian and a distracted driver could easily lead to a serious injury. Please change the timing of the stoplights and/or walk signals at this intersection.”

**More Police:**

“Also, around the whale at night, particularly near Mansfield and Winchester streets, there is very little police presence. If possible, it would be great to have more campus police patrolling the area.”

"I agree that Old Campus lacks a presence of security officers at night, and Old Campus doesn't have great lighting at night, so it will be beneficial to have security officers present at night on Old Campus, and please make them visible (bright orange jackets w/ lights or something)."

“We need more presence of Yale security around swing space. People go back here late at night and feel unsafe doing so especially because there is not even one security officer in sight. More lights are also needed.”

“Tower Parkway, and the section of York St leading towards it are both sketchy at night. Perhaps more police should be in this area?”

**Request for Crosswalk:**

“As a TDer, I find the Temple and Grove intersection VERY unsafe. There is no crosswalk there so we have to cross this traffic-heavy intersection without cars ever stopping for us.”

**Loitering Problems:**
“Recently, there have been a lot of panhandlers set up outside of the colleges, particularly in front of Pierson and Davenport. YPD should be present along this street to discourage and stop loitering.”

**More Safety Information:**

“Perhaps a Safety Informational/Advice Mtg could be held for students who choose to stay off campus. After all, those students are still Yale students and are affiliated with Yale University. I think they should be entitled to protection as well. Just b/c they don’t live in a room on campus doesn’t mean that they should get limited security resources, right?”

**Alcohol Policy:**

“Yale has started becoming too strict with alcohol. This means that people are becoming less likely to ask for help when they need it. Yale needs to go back to having alcohol be entirely a health issue and not a disciplinary one.”

"The new alcohol policy’s focus on punishment instead of student health is worrisome because it may encourage students to stay in their rooms instead of seeking hospitalization / help when necessary. Also, just as students may tune out the administration's conversations about sex when sex is only portrayed as negative, students may tune out a predominantly negative alcohol policy. Positive models of both these activities should be promoted along with the dangers.”

**“2. Concerns about the viability of YPD resources?”**

“The door-to-door service is extremely helpful for students in labs. However, the system that calls students to come out to the curb is glitchy and inaccurate. As a result I’ve sometimes had to wait 10 or 15 minutes on Prospect at night so that I don’t miss the shuttle, which defeats the purpose of the shuttle. This could be solved if the call system was aligned with shuttle arrival times rather than predicted arrival times (which are often inaccurate).”

“The minibus often takes a long time to arrive (30 minutes plus), during the summer as well - perhaps more minibuses should be added.”

“The Blue Line is often at the train station when Yale-populated MetroNorth trains arrive, but leaves before we have a chance to go outside. Coordinating this shuttle with the train station would prevent students from being stranded outside Union Station at night.”
“I think this office is doing a great job. The door-to-door service is particularly helpful. Thank you for this service!”

“It disturbs me that Yale doesn't do anything when students don't obey the law. In CT, the legal drinking age is 21, but freshmen, sophomores, and many others (even recruits who came for recruit weekend) were handed and offered drinks. In my very first week at Yale, I was offered drinks while I was trying to get to know an extracurricular group that interested me. That experience made me uncomfortable and I strongly feel that it detracted from my Yale experience. Yale, by not doing anything, is unintentionally encouraging students to disobey the CT State Law and unintentionally putting every student at risk and in harm's way.”

3. Ideas on how to improve campus safety?

“I'm concerned about how long it may take for a security safe ride to come. It's one of the best security resources at Yale in my opinion, but often times, I have to wait a long time to use it. If there's anyway we can increase the number of drivers or people answering phone calls, it would be great!”

“More nighttime rides for longer hours, please--it gets dark early, and they take a VERY long time to arrive. Also, just because there’s a shuttle stop nearby does NOT mean I feel safe waiting 30+ minutes for it (since they run so infrequently at night). Isn’t that the sort of situation I should be able to call in about, not get shut down over? I feel like my fear is marginalized, which is not a good policy in New Haven…”

“The shuttle service needs to be more reliable, and with a quicker response time. Sometime it is impossible to get an answer from them, and the phone just rings, or the wait is so long (I got the time of 40 mins recently), that most of us just decide to walk instead, despite the time and location.”

“I'm not sure what the YPD resources are. A friend of mine said that PHEs go through a really informative YPD orientation - could these be optionally offered to upperclassmen?”

“But really. YPD resources seem adequate. However, I am concerned about the ways in which YPD resources are often utilized...I mean, does breaking up a freshman snowball fight foster trust between Yale students and YPD? Clearly not. It breeds distrust, antagonism, and other bad stuff.”

4. Other thoughts?
"Lighting, lighting, lighting. I worked on urban planning boards back home and a best practice we adopted into one resolution was "deterrent lighting" - there is a lot of data that points to a downtick in assaults, thefts, etc with increased lighting in hot spots (high frequency crime zones) and general increased lighting throughout a city. Obviously there are budgetary constraints, but if additional funds are allocated anywhere, this is definitely where I’d suggest they go."

"Presence of more police officers."

"More lighting, more blue lights off campus like around student hotspots like Geronimos, Oaxaca, the movie theatre - off campus but still popular."

"I’m extremely worried about the huge alcohol presence on campus. Alcohol seems to be handed out liberally, and while I understand that most if not all colleges have alcohol presence, I get the feeling that Yale is going overboard. It has lenient and loose rules towards alcohol policy and I believe it needs to be more strict. This is b/c I personally see people throwing up from drinking too much, people trying to break into a room b/c they were drunk, and students totally forgetting what happened the night before. These are all dangerous not only to the students who are drinking but also to other students as well. I know a lot of students who feel uncomfortable even in their suites at night in fear of something happening either to their suitmates or themselves b/c people who are drunk are pretty unpredictable. I also know a peer who drank way too much at a party and on the way back, tripped on the curb and fell. She had a chipped tooth, bleeding chin, and other bruises. As you can see, there’s nothing much to be gained from an over-presence of alcohol on campus. It endangers everyone."

"A door-to-door call system that called students when the shuttle arrives, rather than when the shuttle is originally predicted to arrive, would make it so that students did not wait outside for long periods of time after dark."

"Help us petition to the city to add a crosswalk on Grove and Temple."

"Have more visible security guards who look protective and aren’t distracted by their phones- this is the same for the guards in the cars who look unfit to protect us, and/or distracted by various things."

"Positive models of sex and drinking (along with discussions of the dangers)."

"More minibuses."
“Coordinating shuttle schedules with times that groups of Yalies will be stranded at night (such as when the Metro-North train arrives at Union Station).”

“Improve alcohol policies and the ways in which YPD deals with them. Create disciplinary amnesty for anybody who willingly goes to Yale Health, so that people are inclined to call for help, not just ignore it. If YPD does not enforce alcohol (they raided Durfee and L-Dub last year on Old Campus, and I’ve heard that they’ve intervened in other dorms), Yale students will be less inclined to see YPD as a threat and more inclined to see YPD as a safety resource.”
Appendix B: Crowdsourcing Document:

On November 13, 2012, the Yale College Council created a Google Doc open to all undergraduates to edit with their suggestions. YCC members monitored the document. Up to 50 students could edit the document at any given time. The following is the result of that crowdsourcing.

SAFETY AT YALE
CROWDSOURCING IDEAS FOR A SAFER YALE

If you have ideas about any topics discussed below, fill out this form: http://ycc.yale.edu/resources/safety-yale.
The ideas will be immediately added to the Google doc.

The YCC will be meeting with Chief Higgins on Wednesday, November 13, 2012 to address your concerns. We are leaving this Google Doc open to give Yalies a reference of the great ideas 30 minutes of university-brainstorm can do. =)

ON CAMPUS CONCERNS
• * Lighting on York St and Elm St near Trumbull/Saybrook/Branford/JE > I think lights near Saybrook and Branford are okay as they are but York, Elm, and Wall could really use some better lighting. (Especially Wall.)

★ Def. more lighting on York! lots of lights are out
★ Grove St---->Tower Pkwy near Grove St Cemetery..dark/not very well patrolled.
★ Hillhouse Ave is extremely dark at night. Supposedly it’s safe, but lots of students walk down from labs on science hill after dark. There have been lots of laptop thefts on Hillhouse, so I don’t believe it’s inherently safe in the dark.
★ Also, areas beyond Sachem lack lighting and I think the number of Bluephones get really scarce after some point
★ Wall St. sidewalk near BK North has some bricks that need to be recemented. Very dangerous as they shift as you walk on them.
★ Wall St. dark. Security guard presence removed since last year.
★ CAN WE FIX CROSSING ELM STREET ALREADY. Tell Sarah <3 Eidelson that both perpendicular lights should be red for a given period of time for students to cross in all directions.
• Get the engineers and the forestry students in on this.

• And Chief Ronnell Higgins.
• And, most importantly, bring back Chief Perrotti and get him
involved too.

- In the winter/fall it gets really dark early (usually around 4:30 ish, and now by the time I’m done with lab, the science hill area is dark). However, what I’ve found troublesome is that the safe ride service doesn’t start until 6 so I still have to walk in the dark and sometimes I don’t feel too safe. Maybe the Yale Safe Ride Service can change its service time to an earlier time during the winter and fall. That would be beneficial to A LOT of us.

- The over-presence of alcohol on campus is a safety concern. Often times, I’m uncomfortable to venture out on a Friday/Saturday night and people who are drunk or throwing up often try to barge into other people’s suites. I truly think that alcohol presence should be limited.

**OFF-CAMPUS CONCERNS**

- Lighting on Dwight between Edgewood and Elm
  - +1
- Lighting on Chapel west of Park
- Lighting/security presence on corner of High and Crown.
- Security presence at Park Place and Boardwalk
- The area between the divinity school and the rest of science hill is super dodgy at night—by “at night” I mean anytime after 4:30, which is when it gets dark now....
- More attention to off-campus areas in general, they’re much more dangerous than on campus
- I’m sure a lot of people would hate this, but some kind of safety orientation.
- People should really walk with their heads up at night instead of looking down at their phones or whatever. you should be alert, not ignorant to your surroundings.
  - +1

**EXISTING RESOURCES:** Nighttime Safe Ride, Walking Escort Service, Bulldog Mobile, etc.

- Resources are not realistic to use -- takes ages to even reach someone, then have to wait sometimes for an hour
  - or more
    - +1
    - +1
- Can we do something with the blue phones? There are so many but I feel like they aren’t being used enough. (What are you imagining people using them for?)
• This is advertised misleading, it’s actually nearly impossible to use
• Escorts aren’t always available to use.
• The escorts take a long time to get back to you, and during the night, the waiting time can be intimidating.
• Yale Walk takes so long to respond (takes 20 minutes after a call to DRIVE to your location, and then doesn’t walk you...?)
• they won’t walk you somewhere if the Yale shuttle goes anywhere near it.
• Calling a bus or a shuttle usually takes at least an hour before they’ll arrive at your location.
  ° +1
  ° +1
  ° +1
• If you’re even remotely close to a shuttle stop, they won’t dispatch a ride for you, even if the next bus won’t be arriving for 30 minutes and you’re all alone near a parking garage on Science Hill. Their advice was “just wait in your car”...as a female all alone at midnight, this seemed like a horrible idea.
• Same thing happened to me! I parked my car in Pierson-Sage garage and called Yale Walk. They told me to just take the Blue line from the nearby parking lot, even after I told them I would have to walk across a dark, deserted parking lot alone (female) to get there.
• This becomes problematic when you have a zipcar. Sometimes the time on the zipcar runs out, so you have to park it and get out, but then the shuttle won’t arrive for ages and you’re just standing alone in the dark, which is even worse than saying in your car.
• Security ride drivers often seem frazzled and stressed out--I have talked to a couple who say that they are constantly busy with more and more ride requests coming in. I have been in some cars that drive recklessly and speed, presumably because of the high demand at night. I feel badly for them and the amount of stress they must be under!

NEW RESOURCES: Propose ideas!

• Text message services for a walking escort. (Isn’t this a feature of Bulldog mobile?) (Don’t they have this already?)
• Can we have workshops where we meet with the police department/register laptops/bikes/etc. in person? They tell us that there are resources available, but I feel like no one pays attention to them until something happens.
• The possibility of scheduling security rides in advance would be wonderful. For example, if a certain student groups knows that it always gets out of a meeting late at night at a certain time, that student group could pre-schedule a shuttle to take multiple members of that group home at the time the meeting ends. This would definitely
provide students with an incentive to use the resource of the safety shuttles (if rides have to be scheduled after late-night meetings end, most people just walk home in the dark because they don’t want to be left alone in a deserted building waiting for 45 minutes for a ride to come). If rides could be scheduled in advance by student groups who know they will finish a meeting at a certain time, all members of the group could get safe rides home and not need to walk alone in separate directions. This might also be more efficient than members of the group calling individual security cars or escorts.

+1 This is a great point and a solution to the problem that would be easy to organize.

+1 ditto for METRO NORTH/Amtrak. It seems extremely silly that there is always a large group of Yale students on these trains, esp. on the weekends, but that the shuttle schedule is by no means coordinated with arrival times.

• Can we install massive floodlights in the courtyard of each residential college? Sometimes I feel unsafe walking through the courtyard. ←- come on guys, this is serious. I’ve seriously felt very unsafe many times on campus :[

• I’m not sure if people would feel more safe on a bike, but maybe there could be some sort of “rent-a-bike” type system (like not necessarily rented but you get my point). If there were a few locations on campus where you could sign out a bike and then return it at any other “rent-a-bike” location?

+1

YCC sponsored (but 1. no advertising, 2. too expensive.)

OTHER COMMENTS

• Also, no way of telling how many people are interested in any given idea. “Like” feature, anyone? (#fb)

+1 on an idea you like.