



Agenda Items

1. Project Presentations
 - Final Exam and Paper Return Requirement
 - Elimination of Course Drop Fee
 - Lab Credit Evaluation
2. Professor Meals Update
3. Requests for YCC involvement
 - Take Back the Night
 - Relay for Life
4. Reminders & Announcements

Attendance

BK	Diksha Brahmhatt	X	Joseph English	X
BK	Ethan Young	U	Madeline Bauer	E
BR	Mollie Johnson	X	Amour Alexandre	U
BR	Shannon Flores	X	Daniel Tovbin	E
CC	Michael Yuan	X	Sammy Bensinger	X
CC	Luis Patiño	X	Josh Hochman	X
DC	Joseph Cornett	X	Megan Ruan	X
DC	Daniel Hamidi	X	Joel Bervell	X
ES	Sydney Wade	X	Maya Sweedler	E
ES	Joseph Tomchak	X	Phan Nguyen	X
JE	Benjamin Held	U		
JE	Larry Fulton	X		
MC	Kevin Sullivan	X		
MC	Carter Henschien	X		
PC	Lauren Sapienza	X		
PC	Sofia Braunstein	X		
SY	Christopher Bowman	X		
SY	Avery Thompson	X		
SM	Katherine Oh	X		
SM	Peter Huang	X		
TD	Joshua McGilvray	U		
TD	Nicholas Zevallos	U		
TC	Shah Kahn	X		
TC	Devyn Rigsby	X		

Minutes

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

Final Exam and Paper Return Requirement

Presentation by Devyn, TC '19:

- Purpose: To evaluate the extent to which professors should be required to give final assessment feedback
- Final assessment: usually takes the form of an exam or paper, but can take other form as well
- YCC Spring Survey:
 - 83% reported that finals exams were returned
 - 45% reported that final papers were returned
- Why is this a problem?
 - Grading transparency and accuracy
 - Students may feel uncomfortable challenging final grades if they do not receive feedback
 - Students like to know whether their final grade reflects performance trends
 - Finals are meant to test knowledge; feedback helps students learn
 - Yale students like to know how well they did, whether study techniques were effective
 - FERPA requires that a student is allowed to see their exam
- Why is this policy not in place already?
 - Professors have limited time at the end of semesters
 - Re-use of exams
 - Difficulty to comply with FERPA (anonymity requirements)
 - Some students are indifferent about grades
- Recommendations:
 - Papers: Faculty shall make grades and comments available for students to view.
 - Finals: Faculty shall inform students about their final grade upon submission of course grade.
 - Finals: Students shall have the right to review their exams under professor supervision in the semester following the administration of the exam.

Discussion:

- Carter: Have you spoken with faculty?
- Devyn: Yes. There is one professor, for example, who scanned each exam individually and made them available to students digitally.
- Diksha: Students said that they would appreciate feedback if they didn't do well on the final. Could professors provide feedback just to those students who didn't do well?
- Sydney: A bare minimum should be to post the final exam grade on Classesv2.

- David: What do our peer institutions do?
- Devyn: Some take FERPA very seriously and have a mandatory minimum of the amount of time professors must keep exam booklets and papers during which students have access (Georgetown and UC Berkeley)
- Kate: We should standardize it at least within majors.

VOTE:

- **Papers: Faculty shall make grades and comments available for students to view. – passed**
- **Finals: Faculty shall inform students about their final grade upon submission of course grade. – passed**
- **Finals: Students shall have the right to review their exams under professor supervision in the semester following the administration of the exam. -- passed**

Elimination of Course Drop Fee

Presentation by Larry Fulton, JE '19:

- There is a \$20 course drop fee that students may or may not be aware of. Fee is applied each time a student drops a course, after shopping period.
- Rationale:
 - Charge for the “processing of an approved course change”
 - Yale wants to caution students to choose courses carefully
 - Course drop fee exists due to institutional inertia
- Problems:
 - Barriers against student academic exploration
 - Many ways to easily revise this and level financial playing field
- YCC Spring Survey:
 - About half of students polled were aware of the fee
 - About half have dropped a course
 - A third of those who dropped were aware of this fee
 - Fewer students polled said that they knew about the course drop fee than had even dropped a course.
- Peer institutions:
 - Except for Princeton and Harvard, peer institutions do not have course drop fees
 - CU uses non-monetary incentives to caution students against dropping a class: get a form filled out and signed by academic adviser and the course professor.
 - Some schools without fees have sooner W drop deadlines
- Recommendations:
 - Eliminate fee completely
 - Eliminate fee before W drop deadline (promotes long term caution)
 - Eliminate fee for students on financial aid
 - Alert students to existence of fee
 - Provide non-monetary disincentive for dropping a course

Discussion:

- Adam: Have you had conversations with admin?
- Larry: Not yet, but we will once the recommendations are put forth.
- Joe: Yale probably just hasn't updated their policy in a while.

- David: I think we should eliminate the fee completely and not provide any sort of disincentive. The process of getting a course schedule approved in the first place involves conversations with deans.
- Daniel: It might lead to awkward conversations if a student is required to talk to a professor whose class they are dropping.
- Joel: Talking to your professor might be helpful though because you can work out ways to improve your grade if you tell them how you're struggling.
- Joseph: I have dropped a class because the professor was being rude and I would not want to talk to the professor about that in person. Give the option to talk to a professor or an academic adviser.
- Rayan: I think we should just drop fee. Not that many students drop courses. It is enough of a disincentive to have lost the credit and sunk costs into the course.
- Cole: Having such conversations with professors could be helpful to the professor in terms of improving their teaching style or class structure.
- Andrew: I'm against non-monetary disincentive. I didn't begin the thought process of dropping a course until a week before the deadline and would not have had time to talk to my professor.
- Carter: Students have already made up their mind about dropping the class before they even learn about the fee in most cases. In general, talking to a professor won't change that.
- Jaclyn: There should be some disincentive, at least a conversation with academic advisor.
- Daniel: Professor conversation should not be required because dropping a course may be due to non-academic reasons such as mental health.

VOTE:

- **Eliminate fee – passed**
- **Monetary disincentive: conversation with professor or academic adviser – passed**

Lab Credit Evaluation

Presentation by Kate Tanawattanacharoen, PC '19:

- Yale lab courses are separate from lecture courses, but usually paired. Labs can vary from 2-10 hours, outside work can vary from 2-8 hours per week.
- Addressed in 2004 with a YCC report, but nothing has been done since then
- Student responses:
 - “Having labs as .5 credits allows STEM majors to add a lab to a diverse course load and stay under the 7 credit limit.”
 - “I think that in the current system, labs are counted as a 0.5 credit but often involve the same time/work as a 1.0 credit class (or more!).”
 - “I should mention that each of the lab reports had a 15 page requirement, so the amount of writing I did for that class was twice the amount of writing I did in ENGL 115... The workload was like a humanities class and a lab class combined and we got 0.5 credit for it.”
 - “Lab course workload varies a lot by department.”
 - “they have taught me resilience and how not to faint as an anemic despite standing for 4+ hours in a row without food?”
- Issues:
 - Lab courses do not all have equal work loads

- Lack of standardization between lab credits within majors
- Amount of writing in some labs equates to that of WR credits, but no WR credit is awarded
- YCC Spring Survey:
 - Majority believe labs should be worth 1 credit
 - Some believe it depends on the lab
 - Outside hours spent on lab: usually 3-6 hours
- Analysis of Findings:
 - Typically, 0.5 CR course had less than 3 hours of work per week
- CR course has weekly lab report and 3+ hours of lab per week
- Recommendations:
 - Develop a consistent criteria for lab credit designation, based on workload or required time, to determine which should be 0.5 CR or 1.0 CR.
 - Standardize the criteria for lab credit within each major, guided by the DUS.
 - Inform professors that the option to designate a lab as 1.0 CR is available to them.

Discussion:

- Christopher: How do professors currently decide? A lot has to do with inertia.
- Kevin: People often work a lot more when taking 4.5 CR semesters (with a lab) than other 5 credit semesters (without a lab). It would be helpful to make 1.0 CR the default and have professors opt to use 0.5 CR.
- Sydney: I would pushback against making labs 1.0 CR because have 0.5 helps balance the number of course credits if you are double majoring.
- Joseph: To get a lab designated as 1.0 CR, you must apply for special credit designation. But clear guidelines could help professors designate their courses more accurately.
- Avery: For most STEM majors, it's already not very liberal artsy because the number of credits required for the major is a lot. How many Yale credits are typical labs at other institutions worth?
- Kate: It varies significantly.
- Josh: It is preferable to have a standard set of criteria rather than standardizing within each major. We don't want to create inequity between departments and disincentivize students from certain majors.

VOTE:

- **Create consistent criteria across departments – passed**
- **Create singular lab credit designation within each major, as chosen by the department – failed**
- **Create standard criteria of 0.5 vs. 1 that are specific to each major – failed**
- **Inform professors that option of 1.0 CR is available to them – passed**

Update on Professor-Student Meals

Presentation by Jackson Willis, BK '19:

- Find professors with strong ratings on CourseTable who teach seminars in unusual subjects
- Reached out to 15 professors, meals start next week with LUNCH :)
- Opportunity to connect with a professor, get familiar with a new topic, and do so in a time that isn't shopping period

- Working on: publicity

Reminders & Announcements

- Correspondents Gala on Saturday, April 9 at 9 pm (note the time change)
- YCC Families Brunch on Sunday, April 10 at 11 am
- Election season events:
 - Orientation meeting on Wednesday, April 6
 - Election registration due on Thursday, April 7
 - Election campaigning begins on Friday, April 8
 - Debates on Tuesday, April 12