Introduction
Every day, Yale College students interact with their instructors, which include professors, lecturers, and teaching fellows. However, these interactions are typically limited to the classroom and office hours, and relationships tend not to continue past the end of the semester. By creating another way in which students can interact with faculty, students will have the ability to develop stronger relationships, which are valuable for both students and faculty. A Meals with Faculty program would allow students to interact more easily with professors, lecturers, and teaching fellows outside of typical learning spaces. This project aims to institute a robust Meals with Faculty program within Yale College.

Background
Currently, Yale College does not offer a college-wide Meals with Faculty program for students. Although professors in some classes invite students to meals, whether in the dining hall or off-campus, these are only a handful. There are also several residential colleges that have similar Meals with Faculty programs, such as Davenport College, Branford College, and Grace Hopper College. These college-specific programs are typically run by the residential college councils. In addition to this, students already have the opportunity to schedule meals with tenured professors, who are able to have lunches in the dining halls free of charge. However, many students are unaware of this opportunity or feel uncomfortable asking professors to a meal. A Meals with Faculty program would break down this “barrier” to interacting more with faculty.

Peer Institutions
Most of Yale’s peer institutions have Meals with Faculty programs in place. Each peer institution has designed a unique program to encourage relationships between students and faculty. All peer institutions that reimburse students do so through a registration process. At MIT, groups of 3-6 students meet with professors at off-campus restaurants. These students have an allowance of up to $20 per student for the meal and are able to have this experience once a semester. Another part of this program at MIT includes getting coffee with professors. Students are able to get coffee with their professors up to three times a semester and are reimbursed up to $6 per semester.

Similar to the program at MIT, Harvard College offers groups of 3-5 students the opportunity to get meals with professors at six nearby partner restaurants. Harvard allots $30 per student per meal, and students can participate in this program up to four times per semester. Other examples of peer institutions that offer similar programs are Dartmouth College, University of Pennsylvania, and Princeton University.

Data Analysis
Data from the Fall 2017 YCC Survey provides significant insights into students’ opinions on the implementation of a Meals with Faculty program at Yale College. Almost three-quarters of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they would be interested in participating in a Meals with Faculty program. In terms of the size of the student group when having a meal with a professor, there were varying answers. 27% of respondents wanted to have a meal one-on-one with their professor, while 63% of students preferred meeting their professors in groups of 2-5. Given this data, it is clear that students are very interested in this type of program and that they
would want to meet in groups of anywhere from 1-5 students. Another notable statistic is that 62% of students would prefer eating with professors on-campus rather than off-campus.

**Recommendations**

1. Implement a Meals with Faculty program that is a Yale College-wide event spanning one week during the semester. During this week, students are strongly encouraged to eat with faculty in any of the residential college dining halls. This will be publicized in a variety of ways including through residential college councils, residential college offices, and social
media in order to decrease the stigma of asking faculty to lunch. Additionally, templates for students to use to contact faculty will be provided.

2. Implement a Meals with Faculty program that allows for students to complete an online reservation form to register a meal with faculty. Faculty would be reimbursed for the on-campus meal. Students can partake in this opportunity at any point during the semester.

3. Implement a Meals with Faculty program that takes place in specified residential dining halls on different nights. Students are able to RSVP to this event.

Progress
- Met with Julia Adams, Head of Grace Hopper College and Chair of the Council of Heads of Colleges
- Met with Mark Saltzman, Head of Jonathan Edwards College
- Met with Thomas Near, Head of Saybrook College
- Met with Marvin Chun, Dean of Yale College to discuss progress of project. Focused on the expansion of the Meals with Faculty program to all fourteen residential colleges, as well as expanding who is reimbursed for meals to teaching fellows, lecturers, adjunct professors, and visiting professors
- Program discussed during Council of Heads of College meeting and is currently under review by the Education and Student Life Committee
- Held successful Meals with Faculty event in Grace Hopper College on November 29th, 2018

Challenges
- Determining the source of funding for this program
- Determining the best method to implement this program

Next Steps
- Meet with Head of Colleges to discuss expanding funding for lunches from tenured professors to tenured professors, adjunct professors, visiting professors, lecturers, and teaching fellows
- Communicate with the Education and Student Life Committee about their review of the program
- Work on organizing the proposed Meals with Faculty Week during the upcoming semester, Spring 2019
- Analyze data gathered from past events and surveys to develop the optimal program for Yale College

Conclusion
It is clear that there is great interest in a Meals with Faculty program for Yale College students. Many students want to develop stronger relationships with their instructors, but feel that they are limited to the classroom and office hours. Based on peer institutions, Yale should also have a robust Meals with Faculty program to facilitate the student-instructor relationship. The largest
difficulties in implementing this program are in the structure of the program and the source of funding. The Meals with Faculty program team is planning on working with the Head of College Offices in each residential college to secure funding. Future meetings with administrators will help determine the best method of implementing this program.