

Dear Deputy Dean Ayres and Associate Deans Cosgrove and Maldonado,

Thank you for your tireless leadership of YLS during this past year. I am sincerely thankful for all your efforts to keep our community strong in the face of so many challenges and tragedies.

I write, with utmost respect, to express concern regarding the administration's recent decision to remove Professor Chua from the small group roster for next fall. While I am certain that you have reached this decision after due consideration, I am compelled to express my support for Professor Chua, and to share my thoughts, as a 1L, on why this decision is disappointing and concerning.

I will begin by stating that one of the reasons I was most excited to attend YLS was the opportunity to learn from and work with faculty members, and particularly Professor Chua. Many students recognize that Professor Chua is a *tireless* advocate for YLS students, a brilliant professor, and a loyal and kind mentor. I know that many first generation, low-income background, and ethnic and racial minority students—like myself—deeply appreciate her support. In a year lacking the hallmarks of a classic 1L experience, I have found her to be a consistent source of mentorship and guidance. I can only imagine the kind of work and effort she would have put into her small group, and I believe that the Class of 2024's experience will suffer from the decision to exclude her from the small group roster.

Since joining the YLS community, I have found much social and scholarly camaraderie here. But I have also encountered a strange and disappointing proclivity in a handful of vocal students to rationalize drastic decisions poorly. In particular, there are students here who believe Professor Chua is an "outspoken," "controversial," and "problematic" person who merits being "cancelled." These students—who are quite vocal, but I would wager are unrepresentative of overall opinion—are under the impression that they can strip a professor of the duties and privileges of teaching for insubstantial reasons. As a 1L, I am concerned that the administration's decision—lacking in transparency—might fuel and lend credibility to this kind of misguided and concerning belief.

Throughout my life, I have never addressed an institution or its administrators so boldly. I do not sign petitions, write letters, or make formal complaints. Because I am a poor immigrant and a first-generation student, my gratitude, humility, and respect have usually made me deferential to the institutions providing me with so much opportunity and so many resources. But precisely because I treasure the opportunity of a YLS education, I feel compelled to voice my support for Professor Chua and lodge my complaint over the way this incident has unfolded.

Respectfully, it is my hope that, even if it is too late to reinstate Professor Chua to the small group roster for the Fall 2021 Term, you will reconsider your position for the following academic year.

Sincerely Yours,

Dear Deans Maldonado, Cosgrove, and Ayres,

I'd like to begin my note by thanking you for your incredible work, much of which is underappreciated and misunderstood. It's hard to believe we could have weathered this time of crisis without your empathetic leadership.

I write today in response to the removal of Professor Chua as a small group professor for the 2021-2022 academic year. I'm mindful that the unique circumstances of the law school environment often compel administrators to make hasty decisions based on incomplete information, but I think it is integral that these choices—which profoundly impact the lives of both professors and students—be made with the highest care and diligence. And so, I want to share my experiences with Professor Chua in the hopes that it will underscore the depth of her contributions to student life at YLS. I urge you to consider the universally positive experiences that I and others have had with Professor Chua in your decisionmaking.

I almost did not attend Yale Law School. My mentors told me, time and time again, that it was and remains an unforgiving place to those with my background—. . . . Of course, I was loath to enter an academic environment where my identity would put me at an immediate disadvantage. But I nonetheless enrolled at Yale, convinced that I could make my way through with hard work and kindness.

After my first semester at Yale, I immensely regretted my decision. I felt I should have listened to my mentors and gone elsewhere. During that semester, I was told by a professor during office hours that I did not “look like a Yale Law student.” Another told me that I would have a hard time “catching up to my peers . . . my background was just not there.” By the end of that semester, I was sure that I would transfer.

The next semester, I signed up for Professor Chua's class on the advice of fellow students of color. My first office hours meeting with her was the first time that I felt I belonged at this law school. From the first moment I walked in, she was warm, thoughtful, and unselfish. We spent the next forty-five minutes talking about my background and my aspirations, during which she connected me to other resources and promised that I could always turn to her for support. And she *never*, like other professors at the law school, made me feel like I did not have what it takes to achieve those dreams. After those office hours, I distinctly remember feeling like a changed person. A whole new world of opportunity had opened up for me at YLS.

It is no exaggeration to say that I owe all my success at this law school to Professor Chua. I have long grown out of the feelings of insecurity—exacerbated by other professors at the law school—that tainted my first semester at the law school. I have achieved virtually everything that I had hoped to achieve here, and I am convinced that I would never have had the confidence to do so without Professor Chua's care and support.

It pains me to think that there will be 1Ls with backgrounds like mine that will have to suffer from these same feelings of insecurity and self-doubt because of the administration's decision to pull Professor Chua as a small group professor. And what is more, my fellow classmates of color will be stripped of the opportunity to be mentored by Professor Chua as her Coker Fellows. I've learned that many of them will no longer be applying to be Coker Fellows because Professor Chua was the only professor they were interested in working with.

All of this is to say that I would like to add my voice to the chorus of students whose time at YLS has been immeasurably improved by Professor Chua. I hope that you make your next decision in light of our lived experiences and her relentless care for her students.

All the best,

Dear Deans Cosgrove, Maldonado, and Ayres,

I hope this email finds you well and that you're enjoying the springtime.

I'm a student in Professor Chua's International Business Transactions course. I'm writing to express my support for Professor Chua leading a small group this fall. I heard that she was taken off the list in response to the criticisms of a small number of students. I believe the majority of students—including the large number who choose to take her courses each year—would support her being a small group professor. I am one of those students.

My two main reasons are as follows:

- 1) Professor Chua has been an excellent professor and mentor. I can think of no one else who has spent as much time and care in creating an inclusive, positive classroom learning environment. IBT is perhaps the most diverse class I've been a part of, and it has been such an illuminating experience to hear from students across all backgrounds. In addition, Professor Chua has always made herself extremely available for office hours. I have felt very comfortable sharing my ideas with her and benefited greatly from her thoughtful career advice. It's hard to think of anyone who matches her warmth, dedication, and sincere commitment to students' growth and wellbeing. These qualities in a professor are crucial yet terribly undervalued at a daunting institution like YLS.
- 2) Second, Professor Chua goes above and beyond to support minority, underrepresented, and underprivileged students at YLS. This is a responsibility that should be shouldered by all professors, yet she has taken up a large portion of this responsibility on behalf of the faculty. This racial equity work should be recognized and celebrated as such, not erroneously conflated with "favoritism." As one of the few professors who is Asian American, an Asian American woman, and a woman of color, Professor Chua serves as a vital resource and role model for many students, including myself. In the backdrop of the anti-Asian violence sweeping the nation, I feel especially disappointed that Professor Chua would be removed from a role where she could be a mentor to 1Ls and serve as a positive example for an Asian American woman in a position of leadership.

In sum, I am certain that 1Ls would benefit tremendously from having Professor Chua as a small group professor. She has made me feel like a welcomed, supported member of the YLS community and brought out the best in me as a student, and I have no doubt she would do the same for future generations of 1Ls if granted the opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration and for your work, particularly during such a tough year.

Dear Dean Gerken, Deputy Dean Ayres, and Associate Deans Maldonado and Cosgrove,

We understand that Professor Chua is no longer teaching a small group this fall. We think this is a mistake. A mistake that would deprive ~16 incoming students from being taught and mentored by a fantastic professor.

First and foremost, as students who have taken or are currently taking courses Professor Chua teaches, we believe she is one of the *best* lecturers we have had here. She distills complicated doctrine into crystal-clear, accessible terms; she fosters some of the most engaging class discussions, actively soliciting viewpoints from students of all backgrounds and ideologies; and she assigns truly fascinating readings. We cannot emphasize enough how much of a formative educational experience it would be to begin law school in a small group led by her.

Beyond being an incredible teacher, she is an unparalleled mentor at this school. She makes it a point to get to know students, always being widely available for office hours meetings, even to students not in her courses. Notably, she cares about getting to know students first as human beings. Professor Chua actively encourages and affirms students in their opinions, experiences, and goals. And she uniquely connects with students through being candid about her own experiences being a student in law school, working at a law firm, and being a professor. She openly discusses her own insecurities and setbacks, as well as her successes. We fondly remember stories she has told in class about how challenging she found cold calls, how she struggled—and eventually succeeded—in her interviews to become a professor, and how she worked tirelessly to gain confidence and excel as a woman of color and daughter of immigrants in the male-dominated field of law. Like it did for us, we believe her sharing these experiences will resonate with and inspire new students.

None of this is to say Professor Chua does not provide valuable academic and legal mentorship as well—nothing would be further from the truth. She has been invaluable in helping us develop paper topics, giving us feedback on our work, and assisting us in thinking through how we want to make the most of the legal education we are receiving here.

Moreover, we would be remiss not to mention that on top of all of this, Professor Chua is both a woman of color and a consistent advocate and champion of students of color at YLS. Among this letter's signatories are Black students who are: first-generation professional students, queer, and from singleparent households. Each of us have had independent experiences of other students of color imploring us to build a relationship with Professor Chua. They each commended her for her teaching and mentorship, and her genuine investment in the success of students of color at YLS. For each of us, she has lived up to everything we were told and beyond.

For these reasons, we support Professor Chua teaching a small group this fall.

**From:**

**Sent:** Monday, April 5, 2021 7:53 PM

**To:** Gerken, Heather <heather.gerken@yale.edu>; Cosgrove, Ellen <ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu>; Maldonado, Monica <monica.maldonado@yale.edu>; Ayres, Ian <ian.ayres@yale.edu>

**Subject:** Prof. Amy Chua as Small Group professor

Dear Deans Gerken, Cosgrove, Maldonado, and Ayres,

Good evening – I hope this email finds you well as we approach the home stretch of the semester! I’ve met or worked with each of you in different capacities before, but I hope you’ll permit me to write you briefly here, as Deans overseeing Professor Amy Chua’s potential Small Group role next year.

By way of brief introduction, I’m a current 1L . . . . . and student of Prof. Chua’s in IBT and writing supervisee capacities. Being cautious by nature, and moreover quite unsure of my “place” here at YLS, I haven’t advocated for almost anything in my time here so far—but there are two reasons why I felt moved to speak up in support of Professor Chua’s SG role.

First, Prof. Chua is perhaps the most caring, intentional, and effortful mentor I’ve ever had in my 5+ years across Stanford and Yale. Other professors and mentors have no doubt helped me get to where I am today, but I’ve never seen someone so accomplished make themselves so available, so interested, and so invested in my success—so soon upon meeting. Today marks the start of Week 10 of the semester. In the nine weeks so far, Prof. Chua has met with me three times in office hours and offered to meet even more; exchanged numerous emails about both my paper ideas and even her own book ideas as inspiration; encouraged me to “dream bigger” in terms of my paper → SAW → Note ideas; introduced me to guest speakers the level of access I wouldn’t DREAM of having if I were, say, an Associate at their firm; and just provided a level of personal encouragement for my burnout that I’d never imagine receiving from someone like her. Prof. Chua has nearly 80 students in her IBT class, and I know—*know*—that she does or would do the same for each of them if asked.

In other words, to the extent that this type of mentorship is important for helping first-semester students feel comfortable and confident within the YLS/law more broadly, Prof. Chua literally treats her 80-person lecture class the way that I wish every student could be treated within their small group.

Second, I believe Prof. Chua plays a unique, perhaps irreplaceable role, within the YLS faculty interest map. As someone coming from an MBA and 5+ year career, I craved professional exposure and opportunities to bridge my business and legal passions. Prof. Chua’s one-on-one mentorship has provided me guidance and inspiration in a way that others (my SG, seminar, and 2 RA professors) simply couldn’t. I’m fast developing a burgeoning interest in contract law from the Plaintiff’s side, and Prof. Chua has been the main driver in my finding my “place” here at YLS.

But to the second point, I’d like to close on a more personal note. Early this semester, I reached out to Dean Cosgrove in a cry for help. I said that I was lost at YLS—personally, professionally, and academically. I felt so uncertain that Dean Cosgrove had to counsel me on how to think about dropping out. Now, I tell all my friends and family how much I’m loving my classes this semester and how excited I am about my internships this summer. I am not exaggerating when I say Prof. Chua has probably been the #1 factor in turning around my experience here, in the fewer than 10 weeks I’ve known her. If she

can do this for even one or two students in her small group, I feel like that's an amazing asset to have in the first semester at YLS.

Thank you for allowing me to share these comments and please pardon length. I'm grateful for the opportunities I've had at YLS so far, and it is with the utmost respect that I wanted to advocate for Prof. Chua's powerful mentorship being available for future SGs!

Sincerely,

I'm writing about Professor Chua and the recent rumors that she has been barred from teaching a small group next fall. I would like to share my experience with Professor Chua in the hopes that it might be helpful in the decision-making process.

Professor Chua is a wonderful teacher, and I would have been lucky to have her lead my small group. I am currently in her International Business Transactions class and have found it to be an excellent, engaging experience. She has also been incredibly generous with her time. She has invested more energy than a student could reasonably expect in discussing and giving me feedback on a paper that I am writing for her class. In doing so, she has encouraged me to explore a slew of ideas and interests, even those that I initially thought were unpromising.

Since arriving at YLS, I have struggled to speak in class and approach professors in office hours. Unfortunately for me, these seem to be crucial parts of succeeding at YLS. Professor Chua is approachable and unintimidating, and she has been exceptionally good at encouraging me to get to know her and other faculty members. I believe that this is in no small part because she is the only female professor of color I have had in law school. It is obvious to me that she not only understands the experience of Asian women—she is also uniquely capable of uplifting them.

I hope this is helpful.



**Sent:** Thursday, April 1, 2021 5:25 PM

**To:** Cosgrove, Ellen <ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu>; Maldonado, Monica <monica.maldonado@yale.edu>; Ayres, Ian <ian.ayres@yale.edu>

**Subject:** Email expressing support for Professor Chua

Dear Deans Cosgrove, Maldonado, and Ayres,

I hope this email finds you well. First, I wanted to thank you all for how much you've done to make this school operate as smoothly as it can given such extraordinary conditions. Sincerely, I appreciate your efforts, and think this could not have been possible at any other school.

Second, and the purpose of this email, is that I want to express my support for Professor Chua. I've heard whispers that other students have emailed you all expressing their opposition to Professor Chua's leading a small group (largely, from what I gather, stem from rumors). I don't claim to know the complaints, nor do I expect my lone email to be dispositive to your decision-making. Nonetheless, I wanted to provide my perspective. I humbly request that you keep this email confidential.

My first semester at YLS was a tough academic adjustment, as it is for many. I felt alienated from many of my professors. They were nice, clearly brilliant, and indicated they were here to support me. But despite their platitudes about how nurturing YLS is, I found that few were interested in engaging with my ideas, questions, or interests beyond the surface level. I found that my (admittedly basic) questions were sometimes met with a dismissive tone. I sometimes felt judged, and not taken seriously. I'm usually a very motivated, confident person (as are so many at this institution), but I didn't feel like I had ideas worthy of academic investigation.

That changed when I enrolled in IBT. Professor Chua generously sacrifices so many hours of her day speaking with students. During the office hours I've had with her, she has been nothing short of a phenomenal mentor. She has been willing to engage in great depth with all of my academic ideas, and I now feel comfortable turning to her whenever I have a question of any kind. She has actively *shown* that she wants to understand my scholarly interests. She continually tries to understand how she can best help me advance my career goals. She has supported my intellectual exploration to an extent that others have been unwilling. Because of that, I have had the confidence to pursue research activities that I otherwise would have abandoned. I've had very positive experiences with other professors during office hours to be sure (this semester in particular), but no person was so willing to engage as deeply, honestly, and seriously as Professor Chua.

I hesitate to speak for other students, but I *think* my stance represents the silent majority of students at YLS - at least, those who have actually interacted with her. In the classroom, she creates a comfortable environment where people can talk about tough, hot-button issues. More importantly, she *shows* that she is there for her students. She encourages us to think our insights and experiences are valuable and worth voicing - something I wish I had felt more in my first semester here.

To be clear, I don't mean this as an indictment of any of my other professors. On the contrary, I've had generally positive relationships with them.

But the reason I chose YLS in the first place was because of its strong emphasis on mentorship. My college experience was so enriching because my professors were nurturing mentors that I could turn to for candid conversations and career advice. That kind of genuinely supportive mentorship - the kind that

Professor Chua offers to so many - is what I think separates this law school from so many. She is the most supportive, encouraging, and empathetic professor I've had at this school.

I recognize this email ended up rather long, so I want to thank you all so much for your time and consideration. You all do incredible work for the law school and all of its students, and I am truly grateful for it. Have a wonderful rest of the week.

Best,

Dear Deans Gerken, Cosgrove, Maldonado, and Ayres,

I hope you are well. I wanted to start off by thanking you for all of your hard work and steadfast leadership this past year.

You have been dealing with so many unexpected and difficult external and internal forces—I applaud you for your remarkable patience and for taking care of us all.

Thank you very much.

I am writing to you because I recently heard of some upsetting news—that Professor Amy Chua was being pulled as a small group professor.

I am not privy to the actual reasons why this is so. I have however witnessed a few students express overwhelming disdain for Professor Chua based on what they themselves admitted are merely allegations. I have also witnessed these students spinning rumors out of whole cloth after admitting they did not know the truth and speaking so vindictively about her that I couldn't believe what I was hearing. This whole situation has been appalling to me. And I greatly hope that these students are not the ones actually driving this decision to remove Professor Chua from a small group professor role. Frankly, doing so would rob future law students of an amazing professor and mentor.

I am currently in Professor Chua's IBT class. My interactions with Professor Chua in office hours, emails, and the classroom have always been enlightening and motivating. As an Asian-American woman myself, seeing Professor Chua conquer her pedagogy, flawlessly create a genuinely diverse and inclusive class environment, and encourage EVERYONE to bring forth their voice to the table has been such an inspiration. When students feel small, she makes us feel like champions. When students doubt ourselves, she gives us the extra UMPH that we need. She commiserates with us and is willing to open herself up and reveal her own vulnerabilities in order to raise us up. I know all of this because that is exactly what she does for me.

I have spoken with many of my fellow students in Professor Chua's class (both past and present) as well. I have heard this same sentiment from ALL of them.

Professor Chua is undoubtedly one of a kind. I have never met someone like her. As a professor, especially of such a large class, she already has so much on her plate.

But she nevertheless finds time for each and every one of her students regardless of race, ethnicity, political ideologies, etc. I really don't know how she does it, but I am thankful for it.

Her mentorship on all levels—academic, professional, and personal—is unmatched.

And to take that away from 1Ls (out of all people), the very students who may feel lost, intimidated, unsure, and doubtful coming into YLS... who need the best kind of mentorship and support... it almost feels criminal.

I am the last person to want to make things political, but as you know, there is also a lot of Asian hate going on right now.

I think it is crucial to push YLS's beloved and impactful Asian-American leader to the forefront of the law school, not behind it.

Everyone, especially the incoming 1Ls, could use some love, encouragement, and strength. And Professor Chua was literally made to provide them just that.

There is nothing I can do about the cruel, malicious voices of those who want to "take her down." All I can do is express my thoughts and observations to you.

I hope that you will please take them into real consideration as I believe I am speaking on behalf of a majority of students who are just not as loud as those who complain.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.  
Please have a wonderful evening.

Very Respectfully,

Dear Associate Deans Cosgrove and Maldonado and Deputy Dean Ayres,

I hope you are all doing well and that you and your families are healthy and safe. I can only imagine how difficult this past year has been for you all -- keeping our law school humming during such difficult times -- and I can't tell you how appreciative we all are for your labor and care.

I am writing because I have heard about how Professor Chua's small group was pulled recently. To be completely transparent, I have only recently come to know Professor Chua. She is not one of my clerkship recommenders and I have never met her in person. But during the few months I have been in Professor Chua's class, she has shown more interest and desire to advocate for me than any other professor I've crossed paths with over my time here.

**At this law school, we have a dearth of caring, empathetic small group professors (and professors generally) who are both good teachers *and* kind people.** Professor Chua is both! One of the school's professed goals is to help students, and particularly marginalized students, learn the law and feel supported while doing so. I think there are few professors at YLS who do a better job at that than Professor Chua. I had a long-time tenured white male professor as my small group professor, although he is a sweetheart and means very well, he rarely made sense while lecturing. And despite our assigned seating chart for the semester, he could not tell me apart from the other two Asian women in my small group. None of us held it against him because we understand that he's older and that he didn't mean any harm. But it is undeniable that most students, and at the very least the Asian students in my small group would have had a better education and found a better mentor in Professor Chua.

Relatedly, I was listening to an episode of Still Processing (a NYT podcast) last week in the midst of the Atlanta violence, and to my surprise, Professor Chua's voice popped into my headphones. The episode is called "Asian-Americans Talk About Racism, and We Listen - Part 1" and she recalls a grade-school memory about how the kids in her class made fun of her for mispronouncing "restaurant" -- and how viscerally she can still feel the desire to shrink into herself and disappear when recalling it decades later. Hearing her say that meant so much to me. I had countless moments like that growing up, and I can still feel the heat of embarrassment and shame in my cheeks thinking about them now.

**To hear and see myself reflected in her, a YLS professor, is something that has not happened during my time at this law school.** In fact, it is generally a rare feeling for me to see myself reflected in leaders and mentors because of the continuing lack of Asian American representation (and in particular AAPI women) in positions of leadership and power (including and *especially* at YLS!). Therefore, to have a professor who intrinsically understands my identity and my experiences, reach out to me over email to say that she'd like to get to know me over office hours, means more than I can convey over email. It was

also the only email I have ever received from a professor asking to meet *me*, rather than the other way around. For the YLS administration to deny this mentorship and connection to future students, particularly future Asian American students, is unjust, troubling, and problematic.

I understand that you are under a lot of pressure from many different sides. And I, of course, do not have the full picture. But I think it would be a disservice to future students not to fully weigh how impactful it is to have a woman of color, and specifically an Asian American woman, as a small group professor. Especially when that person is a kind, empathetic, and zealous advocate for her students like Professor Chua.

That being said, the main goal of this e-mail is to add my perspective to what seems to be an ongoing discussion on campus about Prof. Chua and a potential small group. I don't pretend to know what happened on campus before my time or the basis/ nature of the rumors that seem to be going around. **I only hope to privately add the perspective of a relatively new student who has very much enjoyed his YLS experience to-date and share a specific anecdote about Prof. Chua.**

I came into law school, among other things, eager to build on my experience working on [a specific area of law]. Almost right away, I started reaching out to my first semester professors seeking advice on a potential advisor for my work. Each professor I spoke with offered helpful guidance and a list of potential faculty supervisors, but I frankly never had the confidence to get the project off the ground. Then, this semester I enrolled in IBT (along with what seemed like a third of the 1L class) and brought up the paper, almost tangentially, to Prof. Chua during our first Office Hours. Not only did she e-mail me hours later with detailed feedback on my proposal, but she had also thought of an action plan and proactively offered to supervise the work. She took an idea I was worried to put onto paper and made it real.

I should add here that I have been lucky enough to have had a complete all-star line-up of faculty so far at YLS. I don't think I would change a single thing about my first (or second) semester schedule. Yet that speaks to Prof. Chua's mentorship even more forcefully. She will go the extra mile for students where and when it matters the most. In deciding to come to YLS, I ultimately made the choice because of the mentorship opportunities and accessibility of faculty and professors. In seeking advice from alumni about everything from picking my law school to picking my course schedule, Prof. Chua's name was synonymous with mentorship so I suppose I should not be surprised by her reaction to my proposed paper. I have even found her classroom stories during IBT to be immensely reassuring and make students like myself feel comfortable sharing our views and opinions in class. The fact that Prof. Chua spends significant time each week putting together unique in-person lists for classroom attendance, is of itself, worthy of attention - and is nearly the singular reason I have seen the inside of the law school since moving back to New Haven 😊

Seven months into my legal education, I am confident I made the right choice in coming to Yale Law School. I have jumped into work with the Admissions Office and with OutLaws to help encourage other prospective students to make the same choice I did. In all these conversations, prospective students mention the mentorship opportunities YLS offers as a central appeal of this school. These conversations are the reason I write this e-mail today. I certainly recognize I have been on campus less than a year, and I apologize if I am sending this note out of turn, but I want to draw attention to Prof. Chua's commitment to this community. I hope she will have the opportunity to support future new students the way she has already supported me and made me feel welcome and valued on this campus.

Dear Dean Cosgrove and Dean Maldonado,

I hope both of you are doing well! I miss being at YLS in-person, and cannot wait to get back once the vaccination drive is complete.

I am writing to express my support for Professor Chua leading a small group next year.

In my experience, three factors distinguish an outstanding small group professor from a good one: (1) helping students, especially those from marginalized backgrounds, feel like they belong at YLS, (2) proactively bridging vast informational asymmetries that plague the law school; and (3) looking out for students' wellbeing beyond 1L year.

Professor Chua excels on all these counts. While I have not had the privilege of being in her small group, I have personally experienced her go to great lengths to make the class inclusive and exciting for *all* students in her IBT class.

First, Professor Chua's commitment to mentorship, especially towards marginalized students, is well-known throughout YLS. Professor Chua is one among a handful who proactively reached out to my affinity group to schedule mentorship conversations. These conversations were affirming and encouraging. But Professor Chua's outreach did not end there. I have heard from numerous conservative friends for whom she has provided a non-judgmental ear and a channel of open dialogue when few others existed last year. One particular conversation stands out – a conservative student had been ostracized from the 1L student body for not adhering to YLStink. Professor Chua was the only faculty member they felt comfortable confiding in. Professor Chua went out of her way to make them feel like they belonged at YLS when no one else did.

Second, Professor Chua goes the extra mile to bridge informational asymmetries. As someone who is from a foreign country, without access to legal networks in the US, Professor Chua provided me with invaluable guidance to help me thrive in law school and beyond. Her advice runs the gamut from courses at YLS and speaking up in class, to being a female leader in the workplace. I value that her advice has always been brutally honest. While some see this as controversial, I cannot see how such advice can be useful without honesty. Professor Chua sticks her neck out for those who seek her guidance. By sharing her unfiltered views, I can personally attest to that fact that Professor Chua makes YLS more equitable for students like me, who have little information about how to thrive in law school.

Finally, she looks out for her students well beyond graduation. Part of what makes Professor Chua a great mentor is that she is interested in you not only as a student, but also as a person. When I first met Professor Chua during 2L spring, she didn't just ask me about my courses. She wanted to know my story. She wanted to know about my journey from a small town in Southern India to Latin America to YLS. Similarly, students are encouraged to share their



personal experiences and insights on various issues in IBT. This quality that helps her maintain strong relationships with former students, even decades after they graduate. For example, just last week a guest lecturer in IBT told us how Professor Chua conducted her naturalization ceremony after she acquired American citizenship. As . . . . I have had numerous guest speakers reminisce fondly about their time in her small group.

Professor Chua exudes the qualities of a wonderful mentor with whom students can build long lasting relationships. Her guidance can make all the difference in the experience of 1Ls who know little about the intricacies of YLS. Every 1L wants to be reassured that their small group professor will look out for them. I am confident that Professor Chua will do so most enthusiastically for her small group, just as she has for students in IBT.

I am not someone who normally engages in such outreach. But I understand that other students have written to express the opposite view, so I thought it was important to share my own. This is an instance where I hope a few loud voices in the student body do not dominate the conversation.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if I can be of any assistance.

Warmly,

Professor Chua is the best instructor I had during my time at Yale Law School. I was fortunate to have the chance to take Professor Chua's Advanced Contracts seminar in the fall of 2019. Her pedagogical method was exemplary. Her seminar struck the right balance between doctrine and theory. Her syllabus included articles exemplifying different approaches to the study of contracts. In addition, her way of eliciting student participation was fair and effective. What was remarkable was that she took the time to read all our reaction papers, drew connections between them, and fostered a supportive environment where students could discuss different viewpoints about the law.

From what I can gather, Professor Chua has been a professor who has made an active effort to engage with various affinity groups and thereby help reduce inequities across racial and socioeconomic lines at the law school. The even-handed way she ran the seminar, giving different viewpoints their due and engaging students from different backgrounds, confirmed this impression. I believe Yale Law School needs Professor Chua to realize its commitment to inclusion, diversity, and fairness.

Dean Cosgrove and Deputy Dean Ayres,

I would like to join other students in expressing my support for Professor Amy Chua, and my concern regarding the fact that she may not be teaching a small group in the fall. By sharing my personal experience, I hope to convey how crucial Professor Chua's guidance has been for me during my time at YLS, and how important it is for future first-year students to have her as a small group professor. As a transfer student, I also hope that my account can provide a different perspective; one that illustrates how her mentorship can be essential for those struggling in their transition to YLS.

During my first year at my prior law school, faculty members were not simply class instructors but life mentors. They helped me to figure out my goals and to face my fears during an extremely challenging year. They also encouraged me to become a better person and supported me even after I decided to transfer. When I transferred to YLS, I was expecting to have a similar experience. Indeed, the reason why I chose YLS over other schools was its main selling point: a small-sized class and faculty-student ratio. In theory, this would allow me to interact with professors more meaningfully. Given my experience at my prior law school, I knew how crucial this would be for my academic and professional formation, so I was really looking forward to it. But as soon as I got here, I was struck by how difficult it was to access faculty members.

Unlike first-year students, transfers do not have a small group or a full pass/fail semester to figure out YLS. As compared to our prior schools, YLS came off as a radically different and unstructured world. Everyone told us that grades didn't matter and that we were free to do whatever we wanted to do. Quickly, however, I found out that politics were key at YLS and that students could easily miss out on important opportunities if they didn't learn how to navigate the school. My first thought was to rely on my professors for guidance. But I was wrong. I felt that they were so focused on their academics that even asking for office hours was considered a nuisance. When I met with some of them, they were not interested in getting to know me or my background; instead, they sought only to answer my questions as fast as they could so that they could get back to work. It was extremely off-putting because I felt at a huge disadvantage for being a transfer; since I had not been here as a 1L, I felt I was not going to find any professor that cared for me or could help me figure out how to deal with YLS. Indeed, at the end of my first semester, I had not developed a single meaningful relationship with any faculty member.

In the spring, however, I took IBT with Professor Chua. I had heard amazing things about her from every student I had spoken with, so I decided to reach out to her before classes started. I was shocked when I got a response that same day--I thought "at YLS? Getting a quick reply from a professor? This can't be real." She agreed to meet with me almost immediately. I was even more surprised when the first thing she told me was, "I'm so happy you are taking IBT. Tell me more about yourself! I really like getting to know my students." For a moment, I felt back at my prior law school. I was able to talk to her about my concerns and adaptation process at YLS. She was extremely warm, caring, and supportive, explaining that she had also been thrown off by YLS when she first arrived. She also gave me incredibly insightful tips about how to navigate the school, how to structure my priorities,

and how to change my mindset to succeed. After that first meeting, I knew I had finally found a mentor and a guide at YLS.

Not only was her guidance crucial for me, but her class quickly became my favorite as well. Professor Chua managed to create a classroom environment where everyone felt safe to express themselves regardless of their personal views. She encouraged students to share their life experiences to shed light on some of the most controversial topics in the law, managing the discussion with such gracefulness that, surprisingly, conservative and liberal students were able to engage in civilized and respectful discussions (something unusual today.) IBT was an intellectually challenging and exciting class, not necessarily because of the topic but because of Professor Chua. Needless to say, she was always available for students, answering all sorts of questions related to the class and going out of her way to thoroughly explain every aspect of the course.

My interactions with Professor Chua radically changed my experience at this school. After following her advice, I now feel like a true member of the YLS community. Professor Chua continues to be my go-to person whenever I have questions about my future life as an attorney. Like me, most of my friends have had similar experiences with her. She is one of the only faculty members who really cares for her students, regardless of their background or their academic accomplishments. She sees us for who we are and is willing to do anything to support us. I strongly believe that first-year students should have the opportunity to have Professor Chua as a small group professor.

Perhaps what concerns me the most has been the damaging rumors about Professor Chua that are circulating among the 1Ls--and even college students--who do not even know her. These rumors have only grown stronger after the decision to pull her from teaching small groups without any explanation. Instead, such a decision should have been the result of a transparent process that should be shared with everyone at the school.

I hope that my perspective can be helpful in sorting out this situation. Thank you very much for taking the time to read this long email.

Dear Deans Gerken, Ayres, Maldonado, and Cosgrove,

I write to you to express my deep concern with your decision to remove Professor Amy Chua from the Fall 2021 small group rotation. Failing to include any talented, dedicated mentor and teacher from that group of professors is alone a disservice to next year's 1L students. But the way this decision came about also reflects the hostile, toxic environment that has infected our community for the last few years.

First, Professor Chua is one of few professors at this institution who has demonstrated a willingness to support **all** of her students. She creates a classroom that is unparalleled at YLS for its openness to people of underrepresented backgrounds and of underrepresented viewpoints. She fosters honest and vigorous dialogue between students who otherwise might never interact at all, let alone in the intellectual exchange of ideas that should be the cornerstone of a law school. For me, personally, Professor Chua's courses were among the very few opportunities I have had to engage meaningfully with progressive students--and I am confident that many of those students would say the same. Outside of the classroom, she is dedicated to meeting students where they are, bridging the gap to many opportunities at YLS and beyond for individuals who have otherwise found little support among the YLS faculty and administrators. For these reasons and more, Professor Chua is an excellent choice to serve as a small group professor.

Second, the "process" used to remove her is no meaningful process at all. As we've seen on too many occasions during my time at YLS, a vocal minority of students can easily disrupt what used to be norms of an intellectual community--civility, discourse, and good-faith engagement. So too here. It has become clear that the group of students rallying against Professor Chua are not doing so in good faith--and I worry that baseless claims are now all that is required for the law school to quietly, or not so quietly, disavow one of our own faculty. This sort of treatment both creates and reflects the culture of the law school--a culture that is openly hostile to any person, whether tenured professor or first-year student, who dares depart from the far-left status quo. This culture effectively undermines well-intentioned efforts by some faculty and administrators to support intellectual diversity at YLS, a cause I've spoken about at length with some of you. It saddens me that Professor Chua is the latest victim of this environment.

I hope that you all will consider the message that this sort of action sends, both within our community and outside it. And I hope that you will reconsider your decision to deny next year's 1L students the true privilege of learning from Professor Chua.

Respectfully,

Dear Deans Gerken, Ayres, Maldonado, and Cosgrove,

I write with deep disappointment regarding the decision to remove Professor Chua from the list of small group professors next year. I do not doubt for a moment that you arrived at this decision in good faith and under extraordinary conditions this semester. But I feel obliged to express not just my unequivocal support for Professor Chua, but also my discomfort with the way this decision was reached—and my alarm over the message it sends to the law school.

I join the vast majority of students at this school who recognize Professor Chua's brilliance, her selflessness, her undying loyalty to students from every corner of the student body, and her commitment to this institution. **The Class of 2024 is incalculably worse off without Professor Chua in its roster of small group professors, and its experience will simply be incomplete without her.**

I realize that a likely response to the above—understandably—will be that you cannot discuss decisions made with respect to a particular professor.

But I am equally concerned by the precedent Professor Chua's removal sets as well as the message it conveys to members of our community. It is widely known that a small group of students publicly and vocally opposes Professor Chua's presence at the law school, not least because of her "controversial" opinions and her insistence on representing a wide range of viewpoints in the classroom. Whatever the official reasons for your decision, they are inextricably bound up with these students' explicit goals and subsequent victory laps over the past week. At best, under that lens, Professor Chua's sudden and quiet exclusion from the small group list looks like targeted action. **At worst, it sends an unmistakable message: speak loudly enough against a "problematic" professor, and you will win.**

In my three years at this institution, I have never signed a petition, lodged a formal complaint, or sent a letter to the administration. This time is different.

With respect, but also with profound concern, I send this message in the hopes that you will reconsider your decision.

Sincerely,

**From:**

**Date:** Thursday, April 1, 2021 at 5:53 PM

**To:** Cosgrove, Ellen <ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu>, Ayres, Ian <ian.ayres@yale.edu> **Subject:**  
Future Small Groups

Dean Cosgrove and Deputy Dean Ayres,

I am writing because I recently found out that Professor Chua may no longer be teaching a small group. I know you both must be in contact with many students about this issue. I hope my perspective can inform any review process that may be ongoing.

At YLS, there are many many moments where I have been deeply uncomfortable and insecure. I am interested in academia, but during my first year of law school I refused to write any papers or do any research because I thought I wasn't smart enough. I had crippling imposter syndrome. Speaking in class would make my heart pound and my head would spin. I've always been a confident person, so this was a surprise.

I took Professor Chua's Advanced Contracts class not because of clerkships (I do not plan to apply to any) but because I was hoping to learn more about contract law and theory—the area I'm hoping to pursue as an academic. My peers had told me about their positive experiences with Professor Chua, and so I was excited to get to know her. It is hard to state how kind and generous Professor Chua is. I didn't feel like I had to impress her, or pretend to care about an obscure legal issue to get to know her. I felt comfortable speaking with her about my career aspirations, when I'd hidden my interest in academia from other professors and peers out of insecurity. Not only does she give excellent advice, she also gives detailed feedback on writing—she even spoke to colleagues who focus on my issue area so that she could provide me with useful, concrete advice. I honestly had no idea how valuable a mentor could be until I started attending her office hours. I've met many kind professors here, but none that have gone to such lengths to improve my writing and my ideas. Furthermore, she always made me feel like I was intelligent and capable.

It pains me to think that next year's 1Ls may not have this kind of experience! I think if I had met Professor Chua earlier, I could have worked on my imposter syndrome sooner. In particular, I am concerned that students may be deprived of this experience for reasons that are not transparent. I know the law school administration is working hard to make the incoming 1Ls comfortable and ensure they will have a positive experience. After everything this community has gone through in the past year, I can only hope that future students have a better law school experience. But as a YLS student, the opaque process that led to this change concerns me deeply. I am concerned that the quiet change will only engender further gossip and speculation among the students. I am also worried that this change may have resulted from rumors spread through the student body. I have had entirely false rumors circulated about me in the past. They can be extremely hurtful and harmful, even when unfounded. As an aspiring academic, I hope professional decisions are not based on rumors.

I love this community deeply, and despite how I described my 1L year, I've had a truly excellent law school experience. Professor Chua has played no small part in making my experience here so great, and I'm certain other students would say the same!

I know you both must have plenty on your plate, so I thank you for taking the time to read all this. I hope my comments here can be helpful.

Sincerely,

Yale Law School, 2021



**From:** XXX

**Sent:** Monday, April 5, 2021 9:44 AM

**To:** Ayres, Ian <[ian.ayres@yale.edu](mailto:ian.ayres@yale.edu)>; Cosgrove, Ellen <[ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu](mailto:ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu)>; Maldonado, Monica <[monica.maldonado@yale.edu](mailto:monica.maldonado@yale.edu)>

**Subject:** Email in Support of Professor Chua

Dear Dean Ayres, Dean Cosgrove, and Dean Maldonado:

I hope you're all doing well. I'm emailing to express my strong support and admiration for Professor Chua in light of recent discussions. Professor Chua is an incredibly kind person, an amazing mentor, and an engaging and knowledgeable professor. I've had the pleasure to take her Advanced Contracts and IBT classes over the course of my 3L year. Below are a few examples of things that have stood out to me as I've gotten to know professor Chua:

- She makes it a priority to help students as much as she can. During my first office hours appointment with her Professor Chua made sure to ask me "how can I help you" even though she only just met me. It was clear that her offer to help was sincere and genuine. In my 3 years here almost no professor has ever asked me that.
- In Advanced Contracts she offered to be a reference to anyone in the class who was in need of a reference. This was especially generous of Professor Chua given the large class size.
- She emailed me multiple times to thank me for bringing a diverse viewpoint into class discussion and to encourage me to keep participating. No other professor has ever sent me a message of that sort during my time here. Her emails were incredibly kind and supportive and were very much appreciated.
- Another professor agreed to supervise a paper I was interested in writing. That professor ended up being completely non-responsive during the process. After a full year of waiting in vain for that professor to even just acknowledge receipt of my paper or respond to my emails I decided to ask Professor Chua if she would be willing to take over the project supervision. She emailed me back within the hour generously agreeing to supervise the project without any hesitation. •  
She carefully reads student submissions and responds with prompt and helpful feedback. In Advanced Contracts she received about 50 response papers from students every week. Despite the volume it was clear that Professor Chua carefully read each paper. She would then skillfully organize class discussion around a dozen or so individual response papers. I've never had a professor conduct class this way, which is quite understandable given the amount of preparation this teaching method necessitates. But class discussions were illuminating and flowed so nicely because of Professor Chua's careful preparation.
- She always answers emails incredibly quickly which is especially appreciated given how unusual that is for YLS professors.

Based on the number of students who enroll in Professor Chua's courses it's clear that a large percentage of the student body appreciates her teaching and mentorship. IBT is oversubscribed this semester with almost 90 students enrolled, about 1/7th of the entire law school student body. Professor Chua's course evaluations are near-perfect.

I have had a wonderful experience here at YLS and I deeply appreciate all that the three of you have done in your leadership positions to help make that a reality. I am also confident that my time here

would have been even better if I had been lucky enough to meet Professor Chua prior to my 3L year. I hope that the incoming 1Ls will have the opportunity to have Professor Chua as their small group professor.

Best,

Dear Associate Deans Maldonado and Cosgrove and Deputy Dean Ayres,

I hope you are all doing well, and many thanks for your hard work this year.

This is the first complaint I've registered with the administration of any school I've ever attended. This is not the sort of thing that comes naturally to me—in fact it makes me quite uncomfortable—but I was stunned (and angered, to be honest) to hear that Professor Chua was removed from her planned small group this coming Fall Semester.

I don't know all the details of the school's deliberative process, but my impression is that the decision was made in response to a combination of scurrilous accusations and a feeling on the part of some students that Professor Chua is too "controversial."

It's hard to even know where to start. What an awful message that sends; not only to students, but to current and prospective faculty. Apparently, that's all it takes at Yale Law School for one of (if not *the*) most popular professors to have a class taken away from her.

It would be bad enough if she were just a run-of-the-mill professor; you know, the standard issue tenured denizen of YLS who doesn't care all that much about his students (or at least not in any detectable way) and isn't particularly good at teaching them. At least then you could say, "Hey, it's not like we're depriving the students of anything." That would, to be clear, *still* be the wrong thing to do, but the fact that the professor we're talking about is Professor Chua makes this all *so much worse*.

Professor Chua cares more about her students than any other professor I've encountered at YLS. Professor Chua does more to advocate for her students than any other professor I've encountered at YLS. Professor Chua does more to mentor her students than any other professor I've encountered professor at YLS. As you are all likely aware, I am *far* from the only student who feels this way. Does that not count for *anything*? **Why are a few upset students able to dictate to this administration and negatively impact the law school experience of so many others?**

I urge you to reinstate Professor Chua as a small group leader. What has been done is not fair to her or her students.

**From:** XXX

**Date:** Sunday, April 4, 2021 at 11:32 AM

**To:** "Cosgrove, Ellen" <[ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu](mailto:ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu)>, "Maldonado, Monica" <[monica.maldonado@yale.edu](mailto:monica.maldonado@yale.edu)>, "Ayres, Ian" <[ian.ayres@yale.edu](mailto:ian.ayres@yale.edu)>

**Subject:** Professor Chua Small Group

Dear Associate Deans Cosgrove and Maldonado and Deputy Dean Ayres,

I am writing in support of Professor Chua leading a small group this fall. I understand others have expressed a different view, so I wanted to share my perspective as a transfer and first generation student. I've had the pleasure of taking Professor Chua's Advanced Contracts seminar and her International Business Transactions course. Despite both courses being taught during the pandemic, Professor Chua did an outstanding job of engaging all students regardless of learning location and making the classroom environment feel as normal as possible. Professor Chua is the best teacher at YLS and it would be a huge loss to the incoming 1Ls for her to not teach a small group.

YLS can be a nightmare at times for students that are unfamiliar with elite institutions. I spent the entirety of 2L year barely speaking in class because it felt like my ideas weren't sophisticated enough and wouldn't add value to the conversation. Professor Chua's Advanced Contracts class was the first time I felt comfortable enough to meaningfully participate. This is no doubt because of Professor Chua's genuine interest in learning from her students and careful structuring of class discussion. Each week Professor Chua would read over forty student response papers and find ways to incorporate them into the discussion. She is the only professor I know that dedicates this much time to making sure every student feels heard and it makes a big difference. I believe that her open-minded approach is why her courses are the only ones at YLS in which people with a wide range of opinions actively engage in genuine dialogue and learn from one another. I also believe that's why her classes are so popular.

Transferring to YLS was difficult in ways I never expected and I am so grateful for Professor Chua's mentorship along the way. She is kind, and funny, and welcoming to students of all backgrounds. My only regret is not taking classes with her sooner. For students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, having Professor Chua as a small group professor could shape their entire experience at YLS. It would be a shame for them to miss out on such an amazing learning opportunity and such a wonderful mentor. I hope you will consider reinstating Professor Chua as a small group leader.

Please feel free to reach out if you would like more information about my experiences in Professor Chua's classes.

Sincerely,

**From:**

**Subject: Message in Support of Professor Chua**

**Date:** April 1, 2021 at 12:31:17 PM EDT

**To:** [heather.k.gerken@yale.edu](mailto:heather.k.gerken@yale.edu), [ian.ayres@yale.edu](mailto:ian.ayres@yale.edu)

Dear Deans Gerken and Ayres,

I'm writing in response to concerning rumors that students at YLS are opposing Professor Chua leading a small group. To prevent one-sided dialogue, I want to register my firm support of Professor Chua.

Of all the professors I have had at YLS, Professor Chua is easily the most engaging. Her International Business Transactions (IBT) class was a fantastic introduction to a broad array of interesting topics. And, importantly, Professor Chua went out of her way to encourage real diversity of viewpoint in class. I can't think of another class at YLS in which the professor created an atmosphere as friendly to student discussion. I learned a tremendous amount in IBT and am very grateful to have had the opportunity to take a class with Professor Chua.

Outside of class, Professor Chua has been a wonderful mentor. No other professor at YLS has been as supportive of my career aspirations. Every time I've reached out to Professor Chua with a question or concern, she has been incredibly generous with her time and her responses are unfailingly thoughtful.

In sum, I can't think of a professor at YLS more suited to lead a small group. It would be a travesty if future 1Ls did not have the opportunity to get to know Professor Chua, and so to benefit from her diligent instruction and careful mentorship.

Of course, because I am responding to mere rumors, I can't address any specific concerns other students have raised. But I nevertheless want to go on record in support of Professor Chua.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions.

All the best,

**From:**

**Sent:** Thursday, April 1, 2021 11:55 AM

**To:** Gerken, Heather K. <heather.k.gerken@yale.edu>; Cosgrove, Ellen <ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu>; Maldonado, Monica <monica.maldonado@yale.edu>; Ayres, Ian <ian.ayres@yale.edu> **Subject:**  
Note In Support of Professor Chua

Dear Dean Gerken, Associate Dean Cosgrove, Associate Dean Maldonado, and Deputy Dean Ayres,

I'm xxxxx, and I'm a 3L at YLS. I know I have not met some of you, so I am sorry to be introducing myself over an email. I am generally a private person and am not used to sending messages like this one.

With this email, I am hoping to provide a brief note in support of Professor Chua. I have heard rumors that some students have contacted the YLS Administration to voice opposition to Professor Chua. Upon hearing these rumors, I wanted to provide a different perspective, which I believe more accurately represents the perspectives of YLS students. While I do not know what complaints are being raised against Professor Chua, I can speak confidently about the tremendously positive impact she has had on my experience at Yale Law School. Moreover, I believe that my sentiments and experiences are widely shared among students who have had the privilege of taking a class with Professor Chua.

More than anyone else I've interreacted with in the last two-and-a-half years, Professor Chua has made me feel confident, comfortable, and supported at YLS. In my first year at YLS, I felt a shocking sense of alienation from many of my classmates and my professors. I am a liberal Democrat, but was disparaged by my classmates for refusing to join protests and failing to accept certain viewpoints. Meanwhile, most of my professors seemed uninterested in their students, and rarely took efforts to develop a sense of "community" at the law school.

When I took IBT with Professor Chua, my experience at YLS profoundly improved. Professor Chua genuinely cares about all of her students, and encourages them to embrace the best aspects of themselves. In class, she brilliantly manages discussions in a way that causes students of all backgrounds to feel comfortable expressing personal views and understandings. Speaking for myself, IBT was the first class where I felt confident enough to bring my own perspectives and experiences into class participation. And, IBT is the only class I've had at YLS where in-class discussions routinely continued after class and lead to genuine formations of friendships.

Meanwhile, in Office Hours, Professor Chua encouraged me to take on academic and professional "projects" that I would have otherwise lacked the confidence to pursue. Unlike other professors who seem to take an uninterested, "boilerplate" approach to students, Professor Chua helped me overcome the specific challenges and insecurities I was dealing

with at YLS. Likewise, she made me feel capable of setting goals and striving to achieve them.

My tremendously positive experiences with Professor Chua are not unique. Although I cannot speak on behalf of my classmates, I personally know nearly a dozen students whose experiences at YLS have been significantly improved by Professor Chua's kindness, thoughtfulness, and commitment to her students. Moreover, *I have yet to hear a student who has actually interacted with Professor Chua express any degree of negativity towards her.* Instead, the only people I have ever heard speak ill of Professor Chua are students who declined to take her class. This is exceptional—there are very few other professors who garner such universal support among students they have taught.

I know this email has been long, and I appreciate that you all have taken the time to read it. As I noted at the outset, I do not claim to know the complaints and rumors that are being raised about Professor Chua. Still, one rumor I have heard suggests that there is an effort to prevent her from teaching a small group. As you can likely tell from my note, I strongly believe that Professor Chua would be an idea small group professor—I know my YLS experience would have dramatically improved if I had been able to take a class with her as a 1L.

Thank you, again, for reading this note, and for all you do for Yale Law School.

Sincerely,

**From:**

**Sent:** Friday, April 2, 2021 9:57 AM

**To:** Maldonado, Monica <monica.maldonado@yale.edu>; Cosgrove, Ellen <ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu>; Ayres, Ian <ian.ayres@yale.edu>

**Subject:** 2021-22 Small Group Professors: Experience in Prof. Chua's Classes

Dear Associate Deans Cosgrove and Maldonado and Deputy Dean Ayres,

I learned recently that Professor Chua is no longer leading a small group in the Fall. I am writing to share my experience as a student in Professor Chua's class in hopes that you will reconsider that decision. I have been fortunate enough to be in both Professor Chua's Advanced Contracts seminar and her International Business Transactions course. From my class experience and interactions in office hours, I believe that Professor Chua is the best teacher and mentor at YLS.

As you all know, YLS can be difficult to navigate, especially for students who do not come from Ivy League backgrounds. After transferring, I desperately sought out mentorship, but felt lost most of my second year. Professor Chua's class is the first class I felt comfortable in. She was the first teacher who I felt genuinely wanted to hear my opinion. From what I see in class, many students feel similarly. I have heard from peers who are typically quiet and reserved in other courses. I have heard a spectrum of opinions that are shared respectfully and received with open minds. Her classes quickly became my favorite--not only were they informative and incredibly entertaining (to the point where I almost forgot I was learning) but they were one of the only places at YLS where I heard opinions from my peers that truly changed my perspective.

After attending her courses for two semesters in a row, I have realized that Professor Chua's classes are so strong because of the rare qualities she possesses. Unlike most of the professors I have had at YLS and before, Professor Chua wants to learn from her students. Students feel encouraged to share their opinions because they are met with interested ears. Her desire to learn and listen is infectious. When Professor Chua gives a student her rapt attention, the classroom quickly follows suit. My friends I and talk about how Advanced Contracts is the first class where liberal and conservative students are talking *to* each other and not *past* each other. Like I said, this is the only course where my political opinion has been changed by a peer. It certainly helps that Professor Chua is incredibly adept at introducing controversial opinions from students in a way that does not put anyone on the defensive. Her eagerness to learn from us inspires a similar eagerness to learn from each other, and for this reason her classroom cultivates greater change than any other course at YLS. Her classes are the paradigm of healthy academic discourse, and I think more professors should copy her teaching style.

As a transfer student, I am beyond grateful for Professor Chua's help and advice. I know that 1Ls, especially those who are less familiar with navigating elite institutions, would benefit



greatly from Professor Chua's kind and patient mentorship. I hope you reconsider your decision because I know Professor Chua would be the most incredible small group professor.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to hear more about my experience in her classes.

Respectfully,

**From:**

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 7, 2021 7:03 PM

**To:** Cosgrove, Ellen <ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu>; Maldonado, Monica <monica.maldonado@yale.edu>; Ayres, Ian <ian.ayres@yale.edu>

**Subject:** Small Group Professors for Next Year

Dear Associate Dean Cosgrove, Associate Dean Maldonado, and Deputy Dean Ayres—

I'm writing to support Professor Chua's leading a small group during the 2021-2022 school year.

I've heard that other students have written to express negative views of her teaching, and I'm concerned that this might be a situation where those with the strongest negative views are most willing to speak up. Frustratingly, in my discussions with other students I have noticed that those who have never taken one of her classes often hold negative views, while those who have actually worked with her hold a much higher opinion. I have taken two classes with Professor Chua, and what I am certain of is my individual experience—so I'd like to share that experience specifically as it might relate to her teaching a small group.

**First, Professor Chua has been a supportive mentor, and she has taken my work and interests seriously—even when I doubted them.** She has intentionally nurtured my ideas and pursuits, even (or maybe especially) those of my pursuits that fall off the beaten path. She zeroes in on the things that make her students unique and interesting and supports them in those areas. This has been a rough semester, but even when I find myself exhausted by Zoom school, I am *excited* to return to the project I'm working on for Professor Chua's class. She has helped me feel the value in my own ideas, even when I felt self-conscious about them. This characteristic would make her an excellent mentor to 1Ls, many (or maybe all) of whom bring diverse experiences and insecurities to the classroom.

**Second, Professor Chua takes care to make her classroom inclusive across many dimensions.** Her classes are not dominated by the most vocal. She meticulously solicits views from students of different backgrounds, life experiences, and ideologies. She does not just call on the first hands raised—she carefully introduces a balance of views and experiences through students' comments. And I appreciate that she openly invites students to share thoughts that are based on their backgrounds (particularly those whose backgrounds are underrepresented at Yale) because learning from my classmates' diverse perspectives broadens my own.

**Third, Professor Chua has a keen sense for student wellbeing that has been comforting over these challenging last few semesters.** We've been in Zoom school for nearly three semesters, and during that time have experienced other YLS-related crises and tragedies as well. Professor Chua has taken care to keep her finger on the pulse of how we're feeling, and she has increased or decreased our workload to match our mental and emotional bandwidth. This semester in particular, she has been sensitive to the difficulty of going straight through without breaks and has taken "respite" classes seriously.

**These would make her an excellent small-group professor.** She would welcome students from diverse backgrounds, encourage students to bring their whole selves to the classroom, and care for students' development as people and thinkers—not only lawyers. Surely these are some of the goals of our 1L program.

I don't know what happened or why she was removed from the list. That is partly because her removal was opaque—to my knowledge it was not announced or explained; I only learned of the change because I'm planning to apply for a Coker Fellowship, and one morning her name was no longer on the portal. (And the lack of explanation has generated often vicious rumors among students, which is not healthy for anyone involved.) All I can say is that my observations of Professor Chua's teaching makes her removal baffling to me.

I'm not sure if the decision is final—if it isn't, I hope my observations are helpful in coming to a final determination; if it is, I hope I have at least added additional balance to the discussion.

Sincerely,

From:

Date: 4/5/21 11:06 AM (GMT-05:00)

To: "Dean Heather K. Gerken" <heather.k.gerken@message.yale.edu>, "Cosgrove, Ellen" <ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu>, "Maldonado, Monica" <monica.maldonado@yale.edu>, "Ayres, Ian" <ian.ayres@yale.edu>

Subject: Professor Chua's Small Group

Dear Deans Gerken, Cosgrove, Maldonado, and Ayres,

I hope you are all doing well and had a nice weekend. I am writing in relation to Professor Chua's recent removal as a small-group professor. I am not aware of why this decision was made, and I wanted to express my unequivocal support for Professor Chua and provide two concrete reasons for reinstating her small group.

First, Professor Chua has an undying commitment to bridging the many divides that fracture our community. In her Advanced Contracts course last semester, I benefitted from one such bridge. Professor Chua would put students expressing diametrically opposed positions in conversation in front of the entire class. On one such occasion, Professor Chua paired me with a student expressing strident disagreement with my position, and this student is of a different gender, race, background, and political orientation from me. Our public conversation which was perfectly moderated by Professor Chua, revealed not only some of our underlying agreements but also brought us to the point of finding *reasonableness* in our points of disagreement. In this moment, we both saw each other, and when the class ended, we struck up a friendship. This pedagogical moment was entirely Professor Chua's doing, and I have no doubt she will replicate such moments in a small group.

In our current climate, Professor Chua has a rare ability to bridge such differences and remind us of our common humanity. I think that an essential part of this common humanity is our ability to forgive, and for whatever political disagreements members of our community may have with Professor Chua, I worry that the decision to remove her may implicitly endorse the sort of vindictiveness that erodes community trust. In her reinstatement, I see a tremendous opportunity for you all, as our community leaders, to endorse the spirit of magnanimity, mercy, and good faith to which we all aspire as lawyers in training.

Second, I would like to emphasize Professor Chua's generosity. This semester I have worked tirelessly with the other leaders of the *Yale Law Journal* to listen and respond to student demands. We are trying our absolute best, but the pressure and demoralization has been overwhelming at times. Professor Chua was the only professor to reach out to me and ask about my well-being. She generously spent an hour with me on Zoom to talk through how I was doing and to offer wisdom and kindness in an excruciatingly stressful semester. In my eighteen years of schooling, Professor Chua is the only educator who has managed to invest so much in my personal well-being in addition to my ability to thrive in her course.

I hope that this decision is reconsidered, and I appreciate you taking the time to consider my perspective.

Sincerely,

Dean Cosgrove, Dean Ayres:

I hope I am directing this input to the correct place (and please let me know if I should be sending it elsewhere), but I just wanted to express support for Professor Chua. I have heard from some students that Professor Chua will no longer be teaching a small group. I believe that eliminating Professor Chua as a small group professor (or otherwise limiting 1L interaction) would be a major loss for the students who would otherwise have been fortunate to have her as a professor and mentor.

My experience and interactions with Professor Chua have been among, if not *the*, most genuine I have had at the law school. She is wildly smart, kind, entertaining, and caring. Despite all of her accomplishments and intellect, she still puts students at the top of her list. She makes herself available to meet with, get to know, and support students in whatever way she can. I and many other students have had the great benefit of having Professor Chua as a teacher, mentor, and friend. It would be a shame if future students lost the opportunity to benefit from everything Professor Chua has to offer in that same way that those before them have.

Sincerely,

On Apr 1, 2021, at 2:40 PM, xxx wrote:

Dear Deans Gerken, Cosgrove, Maldonado, and Ayres,

I hope this email finds you well. We're closing out a stressful year and I wanted to thank you all for your leadership during this time. I am also writing since I have heard rumors from friends that multiple students do not wish to see Professor Chua teach a small group this next year.

In case these rumors are true, I'd like to offer my own perspective on Professor Chua's pedagogy and mentorship. I am currently enrolled in International Business Transactions and have had the pleasure of conversing with Professor Chua over the course of several office hours. She is kind and humble to a fault. She is an exceptional mentor and is always willing to connect students with lawyers and other professionals. She always brings good cheer and a healthy measure of wit to her classes and out-of-classroom experiences. Her scholarship, of course, speaks for itself. The bottom line? Professor Chua goes above and beyond for her students.

I'd like to underline two aspects of Professor Chua's pedagogy. First, she makes a conscious effort in class to draw on a diversity of voices. She celebrates both Conservative and Liberal perspectives, makes sure that her classes are not too US-centered, and is always keen to inculcate respectful dialogue. There aren't too many Professors I can say that of. Professor Chua's efforts to give space to a variety of voices ought to be celebrated. She welcomes students to disagree with her ideas, thereby building a vibrant classroom atmosphere. She never calls on the same few students, but makes sure that everyone has a say--which is a tricky thing to do in a class as popular and large as IBT.

Second, we ought not to forget that Yale Law School has a long way to go in terms of diversity and representation. As an Asian-Canadian male, I have been inspired to see Professor Chua, who shares a similar ethnic and cultural background (our families are both Filipino-Chinese), lead from the front. Representation matters. Given the rising tide of anti-Asian hate in the US, it is important to center and celebrate Asian-American voices. Professor Chua's background informs her writing and her teaching deeply. Seeing her teach and lead has made me much more willing to consider a career in academia.

I'm thus disturbed to hear these rumors that Professor Chua is somehow unfit to teach a small group. Simply put, Professor Chua is one of Yale Law's best, and I know that she will continue to uplift and encourage students, as she has since the beginning of her career.

Respectfully,

**From:**

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 31, 2021 11:35 PM

**To:** Cosgrove, Ellen <[ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu](mailto:ellen.cosgrove@yale.edu)>; Maldonado, Monica <[monica.maldonado@yale.edu](mailto:monica.maldonado@yale.edu)>; Ayres, Ian <[ian.ayres@yale.edu](mailto:ian.ayres@yale.edu)>

**Subject:** Small group professors 2021-2022

Dear Associate Deans Maldonado and Cosgrove and Deputy Dean Ayres,

Thank you for your Herculean efforts to keep YLS running (and running so smoothly) during these tough times.

I support Professor Chua leading a small group in the fall. After learning other students have emailed to express a different opinion, I wanted to share my perspective with you.

Broadly, I worry removing her from the already announced list of small group professors deprives incoming 1Ls of a wonderful mentor and establishes a pernicious precedent.

My principal concerns are:

- **Professor Chua has developed a reputation as a kind and supportive mentor to a broad range of students.** Through my clinic, I know three younger students who have been mentored by Professor Chua, all of whom come from underrepresented backgrounds. They rave about her.
- **Being “controversial” is an unjustifiable basis for removing a law school professor from teaching.** When I pressed a classmate why she wanted Professor Chua to be removed, she told me that “Chua is controversial.” Seriously? This is an unsound and dangerous basis to rationalize blocking a professor from leading a small group when the professor is meeting the professional requirements that her/his academic role entails. In recent years, liberal NYU Law students [sought](#) to block Dean Harold Koh from teaching on the grounds he was an alleged “war criminal;” conservative law students at Alabama complained about an abolitionist professor teaching criminal law. Both student actions were misguided, and I see the same impetus in this mire. There are limits to this principle, of course; after a series of documented and outrageous incidents, UPenn rightfully removed Professor Wax from teaching first year classes. Nothing comes close to that level here.
- **Students would benefit from learning from professors with whom they disagree.** Universities should not be comforting echo chambers; they should prepare students to live and practice in a diverse world. I recognize a handful of vocal students want to return to the in loco parentis model of higher education that preceded the Free Speech Movement, but such a move would impoverish intellectual life at Yale and beyond. I believe a core part of law school is (or at least should be) learning to construct arguments from the other side. The idea that a “controversial” professor with whom first-year students may have



disagreements should be disqualified strikes me as profoundly at odds with the projects of legal and higher education.

- **Professor Chua is known for fostering an inclusive classroom where a range of students feel comfortable participating.** At YLS, students of different ideological persuasions too quickly retreat to their intellectual corners, often not interacting beyond ideological bubbles. Chua's classes are known for attracting students of a broad swath of political persuasions. We need more dialogue, not less. I would also bet any student objecting to Chua has not taken a class with her.
- **Student complaints about Professor Chua are unrepresentative of overall student opinion.** I worry about a Mancur Olson-esque problem, where a diffuse supermajority that either supports Professor Chua (or does not care about exhausting school politics) has not mobilized while a narrow subset of the student body has. . . .
- **The process of removing her has not been transparent.** At the Coker panel on 3/20, Professor Chua's name was included on the PowerPoint. In later days, prospective applicants saw her name as they navigated the application portal. Many made plans to apply to her. Removing Chua without explanation generated confusion, fueled misinformation, and emboldened a particular type of toxicity at YLS. In this informational void, I have seen students circulate madcap, reckless theories and joke about other professors to "take down." I don't think this is fair to Professor Chua, and I know it is not healthy for an academic environment.

Even if it is too late to reinstate Professor Chua as a small group professor for the upcoming fall, I hope these practical and procedural considerations will be part of your calculus in future years.

This incident encapsulates regrettable forces within YLS and academia. If YLS is serious about fostering a community that speaks across difference, we should welcome having Professor Chua lead a small group.

Respectfully,

Associate Deans Cosgrove and Maldonado, Deputy Dean Ayres:

Removing Professor Chua's small group is racist and classist. I write to protest the law school's decision to go down this path.

I don't know what exactly motivated the school to make this decision, but I can guess. My guess is that a handful of students have complained that Professor Chua is too controversial, or that she plays favorites, or that she contributes to a harmful prestige-centric culture at the school. These soundbites--which I heard throughout my time at YLS--inflate Professor Chua's negative impact on the school community and deflate her positive impact on individual student's lives.

Of course, I am biased. Professor Chua was my dearest teacher and fiercest advocate when I was at YLS. I'll spare you the details, but know that I grew up a poor Black bastard raised by a single-mother of two. My closest friends at YLS share similar backgrounds. We didn't grow up--and we certainly didn't enter YLS--with any exposure to the high-brow world YLS feeds into or the vocabulary to navigate it. It was Professor Chua who unabashedly opened up her heart and home to make us feel comfortable and worthy. Like we belonged. And she taught the *hell* out of our Contracts class. Every 1L deserves, at the very least, a fighting chance to get that kind of support and instruction. If not every student receives it, the solution is not to level down by removing Professor Chua's small group. The solution is for the other professors at YLS to step up.

And on the culture front, the reality is that prestige jockeying exists with or without Professor Chua. Students will continue to elbow each other out for vaunted positions with judges, prestigious law firms, and the federal government. But without Professor Chua, the winners of that race will be whiter, wealthier, and more male than they already are. What the law school is doing is exactly the kind of action institutions take that results in a profession dominated by the same privileged pedigree recycled over and over again. We often scratch our heads and wonder how "structural racism" happens, who is accountable for it... *Well, this is how it happens! This is it!* Here's just one example of where I'm coming from: At our Ninth Circuit clerkship orientation last year, there were six Black clerks in a room of over 115. Five of us were clerks for one of the two Black judges on the Circuit. Both of the Black clerks hired by my judge received recommendation letters from Professor Chua (I was in Professor Chua's Contracts class; the other was Professor Chua's Coker Fellow). The other three Black clerks didn't even go to YLS. Shield Professor Chua from the law school and I guarantee you that room gets whiter and wealthier.

What's more, and what's often missed, is that Professor Chua actively *discourages* students from seeking gold stars unless it's what they really want to do. Professor Chua first provides the wisdom, encouragement, and vision for students to assess their own dreams. *Then* she chokes up and swings for the fences. That can mean writing stellar letters to help students land the best damn clerkship they can get. But it can also mean no-holds-barred cheerleading for students to chase after their start-up dreams. Professor Chua's care and mentorship begins and ends with the student, not with any particular outcome.

associate Dean Cosgrove, Associate Dean Maldonado, Deputy Dean Ayres, I know that you know this. For all the criticism I've heard of Professor Chua since I've met her, *not once* have I heard anyone dispute that she is a phenomenally gifted teacher and an unparalleled champion of minority voices--

probably the best (on both fronts) at YLS. I doubt you have either. Please believe the students who I know are writing to you. Trust us when we say that Professor Chua's positive impact will always, always be more important than the controversy of the hour.

Don't do this.

Dear Deans Gerken, Cosgrove, Maldonado, and Ayres,

I know some of you better than others, but for those who don't know me, I am a 2019 graduate of Yale Law School. A couple of months ago, I wrote to Dean Gerken to thank her for her leadership in keeping YLS running during the pandemic. In my email, I expressed my dismay at "the many ways in which our country's failed response to the pandemic has taken away educational opportunities for so many students." And, in that context, I told Dean Gerken that I was heartened to see that all of you had worked so hard to "create[] a hybrid educational model that's innovative and safe and supportive of the full diversity of your student body." I offered my "[k]udos to [Dean Gerken] and everyone on the faculty who put so much thought and work into the planning" and I even made my first ever (extremely meager) donation to YLS (assuming you don't count my tuition).

I write today because I am rather less impressed with what I've heard about the decision to remove Professor Chua as a small group professor in the fall. I am hesitant to weigh in without full knowledge of the details, but it sounds like the decision may have been made without considering the immense benefits that having Professor Chua as a professor offers. I'd like to share a little about my own small group experience, in case that aids your consideration of what to do next.

On my first day in class at YLS, my small group professor (whom I won't name) had us go around the room to say our names and where we went to undergrad. The class included multiple women of color, but it was not until I said that I'd attended the University of Missouri that my professor quipped "Gee, I guess we really have increased the diversity of our student body." At another point in the semester, my professor described YLS as "the greatest legal research institution on the planet that hasn't quite figured out how to operate without students." The implication being that as soon as YLS solved that particular problem, we'd all be gone. I learned little in that class and have not spoken to my small group professor more than once or twice since that first semester. Although I loved nearly every class and nearly every professor that I had at YLS, it was disappointing to have such a poor time in my small group, especially given the importance that YLS places on the small group experience.

Luckily for me, I also had Professor Chua as a professor in that first semester as well. I'm sure many people have told you about what a great mentor Professor Chua is. I'm going to say something about that too. But first I'd like to also say that she is a wonderful teacher. When I took the bar exam, I barely had to study for the contracts portion, because I remembered so many of the rules from Professor Chua's engaging lectures. (I also look back fondly on a debate I had with her in office hours about the scope of the parol evidence rule.) Professor Chua took a special interest in me. I'm not exactly sure why, but I think part of it was that I was an outsider at YLS. So many of my classmates were the children of judges or senators or were fourth generation Ivy Leaguers. They already knew how to gun their way to power and didn't need much help doing it. Having grown up on a farm and having attended the aforementioned University of Missouri, I was comparatively clueless. But Professor Chua took me under her wing, helping me to find my place not only at the school but in the law. At a point when I was suffering badly from imposter syndrome, Professor Chua helped me understand how the writing skills I developed in my first career as a journalist could also benefit me as a lawyer. And she helped connect me to basically every single opportunity that I've had since 1L year. Without Professor Chua, I would not be here today, and I know that many other students, especially other outsiders, can say the same.

I know that you all have incredibly difficult jobs. The atmosphere at the school can often be toxic, and you are under incredible pressure to bow to the school's loud activist minority. And whatever decisions you make will upset some people (I suppose this email is evidence of that). But I think that keeping the school open on a hybrid basis and in a safe way -- in the face of much fearmongering about the virus with little basis in science -- is an excellent example of the school doing what is right in the face of these pressures. And I think that once again assigning Professor Chua to teach a small group would be a similarly brave act of good leadership.

With much love and appreciate for all your work,

## WHY REMOVING PROFESSOR CHUA FROM THE SMALL GROUP ROSTER WAS A MISTAKE

Dear Dean Cosgrove,

I'd usually say that I hope this email finds you well, but I know that it probably finds you awash with dozens of emails like this one. The outpouring is unsurprising. The school's decision to remove Professor Chua from the roster of fall 2021 small group professors is terrible. As someone who has had the privilege of her teaching and mentorship, I (like so many others) feel the need to say why.

By now, you've probably heard that she is a tour-de-force educator. No YLS professor is better at imparting black letter doctrine. That's not hyperbole. Although my time at YLS exposed me to the best and brightest legal scholars, Professor Chua was the only instructor who I could count on to teach me the ins-and-outs of legal doctrine. So much so that contracts was the only subject I had no need to study for when it came time to take the Bar Exam – briefly reviewing my class notes was enough. And she did that without sacrificing the more abstract, theory-focused discussions that are signature YLS. Indeed, because Professor Chua's classroom was one of the last bastions where students of all views felt comfortable speaking their mind, her class discussions were more complex and nuanced. Given all that, depriving students of her teachership is reason enough to write and complain about the school's decision.

But that's not even the half of it: Even more than her brilliant teaching, the decision strips students of the best mentor the school has to offer. She cares deeply for each of her students and no professor works harder to help them succeed. This is especially true for students like me. I grew up extremely poor, the son of Mexican immigrants. YLS admits students like me to fulfill some of its highest values: taking people from historically disadvantaged communities and granting them access to the gateways of power and influence. But it does a poor job of equipping students like me to succeed. The school is a labyrinth in which the best-connected, wealthiest students enter with a map, while students like me come in blind folded. More than any other professor, Professor Chua has the insight, energy, and guts to help students like me navigate the maze. Had she not been a constant resource and mentor, I would not have obtained a fraction of the success I was able to. Removing Professor Chua from the small group roster will stunt the success of students like me and deprive them of a mentor helping them reach their greatest potential at YLS. For their sake, I urge the school to rethink its decision.

Dear Dean Gerken,

I'm writing in response to the decision to remove Professor Chua from the roster of fall 2021 small group professors. The decision strikes me as not only unfair, but detrimental to the incoming class of students who could have benefitted from having Professor Chua lead their small group.

When I arrived on campus in the fall of 2014, I didn't know anything about law school. I thought that casebooks would cost about as much as college textbooks, that readings could be done on the 2-hour MetroNorth ride back home on the weekends, that I could work a retail job during my first semester 1L year, and that I could return home and pick up one of the many jobs I had prior to law school during summer break. I struggled in myriad ways the first few months of the semester. At my lowest point, after many teary phone calls with my family and a meeting with Dean Cosgrove, I was ready to quit law school. But then Professor Chua invited me and a few of my classmates to get together after class to build on a discussion about critical feminist critique of our contracts casebook that we started in class. At that gathering, Professor Chua told me that I was doing well in her class, and it was the first time that any of my professors took an interest in me, let alone encouraged me to stay the course.

It's not an exaggeration to say that if it weren't for Professor Chua, I would have dropped out of law school. Her support, guidance, and mentorship has shaped me into the lawyer I am today. When my small group professor refused to write recommendations for my 1L summer job applications, Professor Chua stepped in and helped land me an internship with the former managing partner of my current firm. When I served as Social Chair of BLSA and worked with the Admissions Office as a Diversity Representative, Professor Chua volunteered to host events with me—something that no other professor did. And when countless tragedies of racial violence sent me and my fellow classmates of color reeling and shaken, Professor Chua was among the few professors who fostered safe spaces for us. When I look back on my time in law school, Professor Chua was a part of my most positive experiences. And countless others—especially students of color—can say the same, because Professor Chua is one of the only faculty members demonstrably dedicated to making the legal profession more diverse and inclusive.

If the purpose of the small group is to provide incoming law students with a strong mentor, a fierce advocate, and an experienced academic, then depriving students of a small group experience with Professor Chua is misguided at best. I urge you to reconsider this decision.

Sincerely,

Hi Dean Gerken,

I'm a YLS '13 alum, and I'm writing because I was highly disturbed to read about the circumstances surrounding the latest action the Law School has taken against Professor Chua. There's a dearth of publicly available information but at minimum, it appears the decision to bar her from teaching a small group was made and announced without her having even been given the opportunity to hear and respond to the specific allegations.

As I've shared with you previously (see below), in my time at YLS, Professor Chua was the single most valuable faculty resource at the Law School for minority, first-generation law students like me, precisely because she welcomed us into her home and dared to speak candidly about the realities of life in our profession. I know (as I'm sure you do) that many other students and alums feel the same way about her. The least YLS owes people like us is to make a fuller public accounting of the facts and to demonstrate due process has been followed. As it stands, it looks as though the administration reacted hastily and secretively in response to unsubstantiated allegations and is complicit in her character assassination by innuendo. I desperately hope that is not the case.

I'm slated to participate in the Yale Forward APALSA/SALSA Lunch this Saturday, but in light of how I currently understand the administration has treated YLS's strongest faculty champion of Asian American students, I do not feel comfortable telling this group of admitted students that YLS is the best choice for them. I hope to learn more between now and Saturday that changes my mind, but in the meantime I've copied Dean Ingber and Eric here - I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Best Regards,



Dear Dean Gerken,

As a proud 2010 YLS grad and extremely proud Chua-small group alum I am extremely disturbed to hear that (a) 1Ls next year will be deprived of Professor Chua's mentorship and (b) the law school is punishing Professor Chua based on idle gossip from a law school plagued by gossip and palace intrigue. From what I can ascertain, I'm not even sure that the accusation, if true, would warrant the law school punishing Professor Chua in this manner and seriously damaging her reputation (as I understand it, this is now a Yale Daily News story).

I came to YLS straight for undergrad at the University of Iowa. I was extremely blessed to have been placed in Professor Chua's small group. Unlike some people who come to YLS from cities and schools that don't have endowments the size of small country GDPs, I never once felt out of place. This is largely, if not entirely, thanks to Professor Chua. Thanks to Professor Chua I not only felt like I belonged, but that I was special and that my opinion mattered. Like nearly every member of my small group, I look back at my time in Professor Chua's small group as the most formative time of law school. And her mentorship throughout my time at YLS gave me the confidence and skills I needed to be successful out of New Haven.

Why is YLS going to deprive incoming 1Ls of that?

Moreover, I've noticed an extremely disturbing trend of the law school succumbing to petty demands and gossip of a disgruntled few -- leading to a pattern of harassment toward Professor Chua that is not only unwarranted, it is frankly disgusting.

Eleven (11!) years after graduating from YLS I can say that I've only had one mentor who has impacted me as greatly as Professor Chua. Though he wasn't a YLS grad himself, my wife's grandfather, Bobby, founded Human Rights Watch and was deeply involved with the law school through the Bernstein Fellowships. My last visit to the law school was with him for the 2018 Bernstein Symposium. Although he passed away nearly two years ago, my wife and I talk about him and his impact on the world every day. He was never silent when he saw injustice and he encouraged all of those around him to do the same. Throughout my years at YLS and as an alum, I've thought of YLS as standing for, and encouraging the same. I am no longer sure it does.

I am an extremely proud YLS grad- and even prouder Chua small group member. I hope that the law school reverses course before more damage is done to Professor Chua's reputation. But if it doesn't, there must be a point where some of us can no longer be silent to the injustices YLS is inflicting upon a brilliant professor, a mentor, and a wonderful human being.

