

Appendix A: Detailed Recommendations

Our full recommendations for many of the subjects we discussed are contained in the main report. For those topics where the Committee is making more detailed recommendations than those outlined in the report, you will find them below:

Student Diversity

Admitting and recruiting a diverse class

YLS should closely examine the admissions process to ensure we aren't overlooking strong candidates.

We should energetically recruit minority applicants, just as our peers do. This includes encouraging qualified applicants to apply, ensuring we don't miss excellent candidates during the review process, and engaging in more energetic recruiting for candidates who have been admitted.

We should revamp our programming during Admitted Students Weekend. A student committee should help the Admissions Office plan the weekend. We should also be sure that events are not scheduled against one another if they draw from a similar population of students. Up-front funding and support should be offered to the affinity groups for supporting these recruitment events.

Associate Dean Rangappa has already hired several students to serve as Diversity Representatives to help with recruiting efforts. We recommend expanding this program and pulling in enthusiastic students to assist.

Affinity group alumni should be encouraged to play a role in reaching out to admitted students, perhaps even participating in ASW activities. For example, we often lose excellent minority applicants and First Generation Professionals to exploding scholarship offers from other schools. It would be very useful to connect those admitted students to alumni who had turned down similar offers and could help applicants think through the tradeoffs during the short period in which they are forced to decide.

We should build on the success of the "Candidate Referral Service letters"—letters inviting top-tier minority applicants to apply—to the extent possible. YLS already sends letters and sample essays to minority students who have high LSATs and GPAs. This program has been highly successful at recruiting minority applicants. Students on our own committee indicated that they would not have applied to YLS without this invitation, and the sample essays are very helpful to students, particularly First Generation Professionals, to see what an application essay for a professional school looks like.

The faculty should play a greater role in recruiting

More faculty should take part in calling new admits and taking part in Admitted Students Weekend. As with other faculty mentoring efforts, this work should be acknowledged and rewarded by the Dean.

Faculty should consider signing books or letters for new admits interested in the faculty member's area of expertise.

Areas for further inquiry

We should try to find a better means of tracking our yield for conservative students and First Generation Professionals.

Students admitted in the transfer program are less diverse than students admitted through the regular process. While we aren't able to fully analyze the process, we encourage the School to give additional thought to how the process works and could be improved.

We should examine the role financial aid plays in the recruitment process.

We should examine the application itself and compare it to those of our peers.

We should explore whether Yale, in conjunction with peer schools, can get better data on First Generation Professionals from LSAC.

While the Law School generally treats all student groups as if they were the same, it should accommodate differences among student groups in limited contexts, e.g.:

Deploying a different funding strategy for NALSA due to its size

Targeting recruitment outreach for groups whose admissions yield rate is consistently lower than our average (Blacks, Latinx, conservative students)

Setting aside space in the Law School for Muslim students to pray

Faculty Diversity

The faculty should approach faculty diversity more strategically, more reflectively, and more systematically.

The faculty should consult with the university to identify the resources available for designing an inclusive hiring process.

Mentoring

The Law School should undertake a major mentoring initiative, as follows.

Improve Faculty Mentorship

Work with the Dean of Students Office, Yale Law Women, and affinity groups to develop a “Best Mentoring Practices” guide akin to YLW’s best teaching practices guide.

Develop a Law School-sponsored prize that honors mentorship by faculty members.

Support faculty who take on substantial mentoring activities, perhaps by offering teaching relief or other forms of acknowledgment and support.

Provide funding for mentoring events, just as we do for speaking events. For instance, the School could survey faculty interest in participating in teas and dinners with affinity groups or through the Office of Student Affairs and help support students build ties to faculty mentors. Faculty have observed that these events often work better with a substantive component.

Establish a more effective system for pairing students with faculty who can offer advice on courses, careers, papers, etc.

Provide training for interested faculty with an experienced trainer (on effective mentoring and teaching). Accompany trainings with private feedback.

Highlight teaching and mentorship by current faculty and new hires.

Create a Minimal Baseline for Faculty Mentorship

Establish a norm that all small group professors should serve as references on behalf of qualified students for summer employers and should meet with students individually during office hours.

Take professors who refuse to engage in basic mentorship activities out of the small groups rotation.

Enforce the rule against hiring first-semester 1Ls as research assistants.

Strongly urge faculty to post research assistant positions in a central location.

Post all office hours on each faculty member's bio page or in a list circulated by the Dean of Students Office at the beginning of the semester. Encourage faculty to make clear that students need not come to office hours with concrete questions or to designate some hours for more general conversations.

Faculty Hiring

Hire a diverse faculty.

Recognize and Facilitate Mentorship by Students and Young Alumni

Develop Law School-sponsored prizes that honor student service in the same fashion we honor student writing, clinical work, etc.

Build up our alumni associations to include affinity group alumni associations and involve young alumni in the mentoring process.

Embed affinity group members in a support network from “cradle to grave”—from the moment they are admitted to the Law School until after they graduate. Efforts might include sponsoring informal summer events in major cities that bring together new admits, current students, and young alumni. YLS might also provide funding for affinity group gatherings with alumni, both during the school year and during the summer. It might also rely more heavily on alumni to mentor students in specialized practice areas.

Hire and train teaching assistants for all 1L sections to create a broader network of peer support. Improve the training for Coker Fellows.

Create a “fellows” and “associate fellows” program similar to the residential college fellows program in order to bring members of the Yale/New Haven community into the Law School.

Create more community-building opportunities during Orientation.

Provide training by an experienced career coach or management expert on effective mentorship relationships to interested students.

Bring in career coaches and other career training specialists for students.

Create a better budgeting and management system for student groups by:

Granting students the discretion to control their own budgets and use funds from whatever source they prefer.

Supplementing fundraising for affinity groups, perhaps by creating a standing fund to supplement what the groups raise themselves.

Providing support to affinity groups organizing special events while letting the students take the lead on programming.

Providing more Yale credit cards and creating standing vendor agreements to facilitate student ordering.

Lifting moratoria on scheduling events except where absolutely necessary (e.g., reserving rooms for alumni weekend events or new admits weekend). It may make sense to maintain the moratorium on the solicitation of 1Ls as volunteers, journal editors, etc., between Orientation and the student activities fair.

Ending the restrictions on scheduling events against one another except where absolutely necessary.

Ending the practice of charging student groups for gift cards for buddy programs, which facilitate peer-to-peer mentoring for the 1Ls.

Ending charges for student groups using outside food vendors (which is generally more cost effective and helps students stretch their budgets).

Educating the community to ensure they are mindful of the dietary restrictions of all of our students.

Diversity Dean

The Law School should hire a consultant to examine the support YLS provides for diversity, survey best practices at other schools, and make a recommendation on how best to support diversity initiatives going forward.

The consultant should also help implement the Committee's recommendations in the coming months, particularly those having to do with admissions and alumni.

Classroom Climate

The Law School should create a system that would allow students to report faculty comments to the Dean of Students confidentially.

The Law School should designate the Dean of Students or someone in her office as an ombudsperson when more serious problems arise.

Alumni Affairs

Alumni Reunion Dinners

Student Affairs and the Alumni Affairs Office should take full responsibility for organizing and funding the Alumni Dinners. While it would be useful to involve students in planning the event and extending invitations, they shouldn't bear the burden of fundraising and logistics.

The Alumni Affairs Office should work with Student Affairs and the affinity groups to find a better time for the affinity events. It is very hard to convince people to come to New Haven on a Thursday. We recognize that this would require some accommodation and that it is important not to schedule anything that conflicts with class events. There might be, for instance, a cocktail party for all the affinity groups on Friday or Saturday followed by individually arranged events over the course of the weekend (e.g., an additional cocktail party, a dessert reception, a Sunday brunch).

Fundraising Generally

Setting aside fundraising for the alumni event, which should be done by the Law School, the Offices of Career Development, Development, and Student Affairs should assist student groups in fundraising. Alternatively, YLS should create a manual providing the best practices for law firm fundraising (the source of most funding for affinity groups).

In order to avoid the awkwardness associated with 2Ls fundraising from potential employers during hiring season, the Law School should help student groups begin fundraising in the late spring ideally, encourage previous boards to fundraise enough to provide for the next board, and/or reach out to the usual funders to make clear the importance of being open to requests in the spring or early summer.

The Law School should establish a diversity fund to which alumni can donate.

Alumni Networks

YLS should fully support the Alumni Affairs Office's effort to create tools that help affinity groups create networks of alumni in those groups.

Student Affairs and the Alumni Affairs Office should create and help maintain alumni lists that can be easily used by the affinity groups to connect with their alumni as long as these lists are not utilized for fundraising and adhere to the guidelines set by the Administration.

The Law School should continue meeting with young alumni to assess their experiences at the Law School, to find ways to encourage alumni engagement, and to build mentoring for affinity group members.

Embedding the Conversation into the Law School

Data. The Law School should regularly collect data that includes, inter alia, the composition of the student body; admissions statistics and yields; and the racial/ethnic make-up of our students who clerk, serve as Coker Fellows, win writing prizes, serve as research assistants, etc. The Law School should also conduct an annual survey of student satisfaction that can be disaggregated by affinity group membership. The Law School should consider using the end-of-the-semester class reviews to generate additional data on inclusion.

Student/faculty committee. At least once every three years, the dean should convene a committee of faculty and students to review the prior committee's report, evaluate the success of its proposals, and examine the data the Law School has been collecting. Committees should start with the work that has been done as a baseline, including our report, the 2003 faculty report, Class Action, Mental Health, and the various Yale Law Women reports. Given that it will take time to implement these proposals, the dean might consider maintaining a working group of committee members for the next year or two.

Diversity website. The Law School should create a diversity website that includes, inter alia, a statement by the dean on the value of diversity; discusses Yale's history of promoting diversity; identifies resources for students, links to student organization that serve diverse populations; profiles students, professors and staff discussing personal experiences; and notifies students about research on the issue and diversity-related events on campus.

A complement to YLW's Portraits Project. In addition to encouraging the Administration to fundraise for portraits of a more diverse set of alumni, also hang professionally done, large headshots of students and young alumni in our classrooms. These could include photos of the students who win the mentorship awards, young alumni, even candid shots of the students from that year.

Encouraging innovation and disseminating best practices. Create a yearly prize that either acknowledges the most innovative diversity/inclusion/community-building idea put forward or identifies a “best practice” among student groups, faculty, or staff (e.g., FedSoc’s and LLSA’s programming for students interested in the *Yale Law Journal*).

A yearly lecture. The Law School should invite speakers to talk about the project of inclusion. In addition to inviting civil-rights figures, YLS might ask experts to talk about the spotlight effect, implicit bias, and the like. Students should be centrally involved in choosing the speaker, and the program should include ample time for students to interact with the speaker.

Community-oriented solutions and support. One of the ways in which the YLS community and the Dean have promoted inclusion is by seeking community-wide solutions and support for issues related to affinity group members. One good example was the Law School’s efforts to support First Generational Professionals through changes in the summer stipend program.

Orientation. Orientation should serve as an opportunity for community building and establishing community norms. It should include fewer information sessions and more efforts by the leadership of the School to set norms. One of our students invoked former Dean Guido Calabresi’s statement at a lunch session that “we take care of each other here.” We would also encourage the Dean of Students to maintain and perhaps build on the orientation panel on having difficult conversations at the Law School.

Decanal meetings. The School should organize once-a semester meetings with YLS’s administrative offices to host diversity-related focus groups with student leaders and the Dean. Ideally, the administrator would circulate an agenda beforehand and open the meeting by summarizing what progress has been made since the last discussion.

State of the School. Circulate an agenda for the state of the school in advance and devote more time to student conversation.

Faculty workshops on teaching and mentoring. Set aside a workshop once a year for the faculty to discuss best practices for teaching and mentoring.