

## YPA OPEN FORUM

### Chairs [10 min]

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1. Opening announcements
2. Vaccination concerns
3. Budget: Spending + Planning
4. Yale Connect
5. The future of OPA

1. The Chairs addressed the death of Kevin Jiang and its impact on his friends and family and Yale community. If anyone feels affected/has any concerns, please reach out.

Kevin's gofundme website: <https://gofund.me/a20339e8>

2. Currently, COVID vaccines are available to those who work with patients or handle patient samples or interact with people who are at high risk exposure. If you think you are qualified to get the vaccine, please reach out to the dean or the chair of your department.

Many Tong added that PIs need to submit a form to get the approval from Tony Koleski in order to receive the vaccine.

3. We propose the same budget plan. Since there have been many financial struggles, we should spend our current budget more wisely to be reflected better and responsible.

4. Yale Connect has been working well.

5. The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA) is currently hiring a new director (currently held by John Alvaro). The Chairs had a meeting with the director to talk about what YPA wants from OPA. The Chairs met the finalist.

OPA is going to be absorbed by graduate school—hope this will open up more doors to YPA since Graduate school usually has more access to programs. Postdoc is such a big and stable part of school, its presence should be more represented and acknowledged.

### Treasury [5 min]

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1. Treasury update

1. Overall we have spent 21.12% of total budget. Currently we're waiting for the reimbursement for sketching workshop.

\$240 Provost's office contribution of the 2020 Art in Research Contest was mischarged to our account, it is now solved.

Yale Connect Accounting and Budgeting is currently not useful for Treasury committee so they'll continue using Google drive for now.

Committees,

Please send us your budget proposals for next fiscal year.

Please send us the summary of each spending, including how the program you organized helped the community.

### **Mentorship Committee [5 min]**

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1. "Cool Techniques in Biological Research series" (1 min)  
call for volunteers, Lina Ntokou will lead this program ([aglaia.ntokou@yale.edu](mailto:aglaia.ntokou@yale.edu))
2. "Postdoc Mentoring Program" (4 min)  
a unique opportunity for Yale postdocs who seek for additional mentoring support  
Berrak Ugur will speak as the leader of this initiative

1. Reminder: there are opening spots for Cool techniques in Biological research series. This is a new program that our committee is starting. Still in need of volunteers—if you're interested, please email Lina. It's a good opportunity to mentor undergraduates. The lecture is organized into: Intro to your project: 20 min, Techniques you used: 40 min, Q&A/exercise: 30 min.

2. Postdoc Mentoring Program is a new mentoring program that we're trying to initiate. 5-6 postdocs will be matched with a faculty member to discuss career issues (ex\_grants or any career related questions). We met with the chairs of medical school to encourage faculty members to participate in the program. We had mixed responses from the faculty. One of the questions from the faculty members was: What about having a committee like graduate students do? We answered that that issue should be handled by individual departments and that we want this initiative to be school-wide program. If you'd like to join or have any other ideas, please reach out. We will send out emails to faculty members and postdocs to see if how many are willing to participate. We're starting with basic science and med school.

We will discuss later with Mentorship & Advocacy Committees about working on the peer-writing program together.

### **Advocacy Committee [17 min]**

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1. Postdoc Speed Social Event (5 min)
2. Upcoming Mental Health First Aid Course (2 min)
3. Review data from the Mental Health Survey sent out at the end of 2020 (10 min)

1. Launching at the end of this month. Similar to speed dating to encourage people to interact with more people, especially people who just joined Yale. Depending on the outcome, we will decide if we are going to organize this event or not.

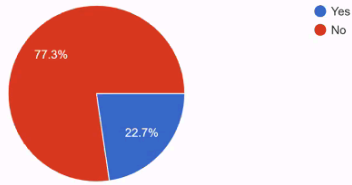
2. Mental health first aid course is back. 4/6 and 4/22. Will start advertising next week.

3.

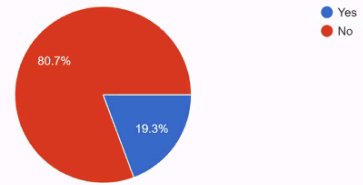
## Details of the mental health survey

- Sent out to PDs on Dec 8<sup>th</sup> 2020
- 150 total respondents
  - ~12% of all postdocs at Yale responded to the survey (using a population of 1,228 PDs as of Aug)

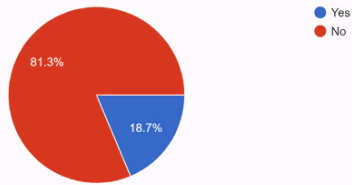
Are you responsible of taking care of anyone at home (children, spouse, elderly adults, etc)?  
150 responses



Are you or anyone in your household at increased risk of contracting COVID19?  
150 responses

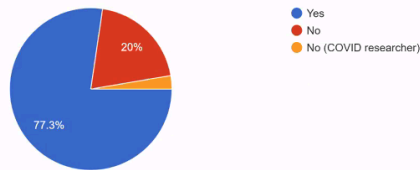


Are you the sole caretaker?  
150 responses

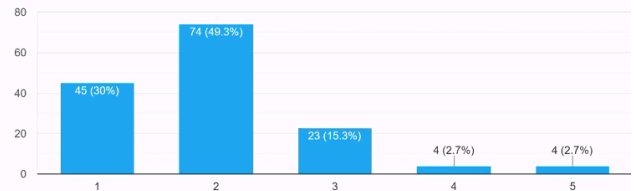


## Research

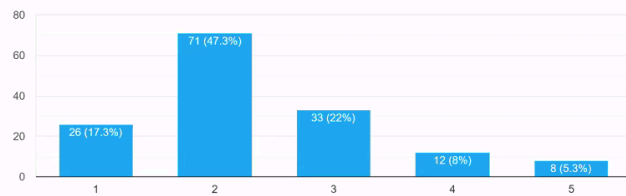
Since March 2020, was your work interrupted for any period?  
150 responses



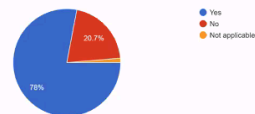
Overall, how would you say the pandemic has affected your work?  
150 responses



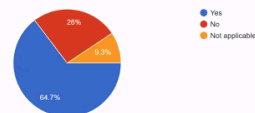
Overall, how would you rate your overall productivity during the pandemic?  
150 responses



Are you concerned the pandemic will negatively impact your career trajectory?  
150 responses



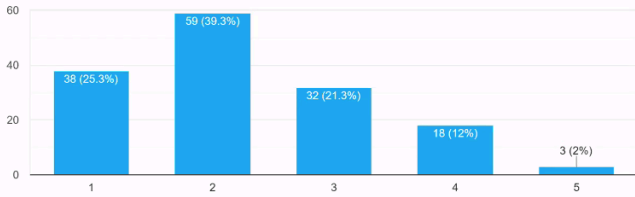
Are you concerned the pandemic will negatively impact your ability to apply to grants?  
150 responses



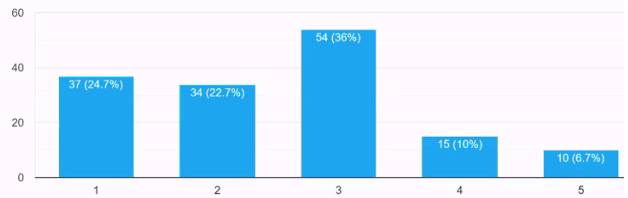
Many experienced disruption in work. many saw COVID to be detrimental to their career plan

# Work environment and safety

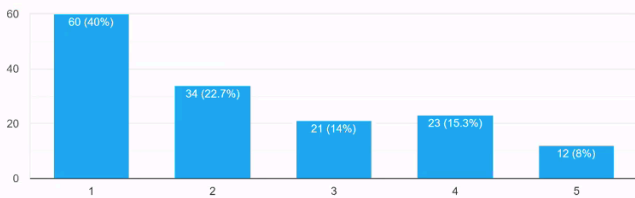
Do you feel as if Yale is effectively managing COVID in the workplace?  
150 responses



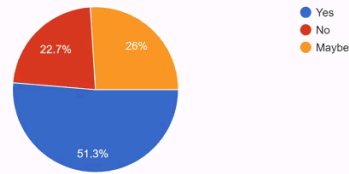
How comfortable are you in the physical work place?  
150 responses



Do you feel comfortable communicating to your mentor concerns related to COVID and work?  
150 responses



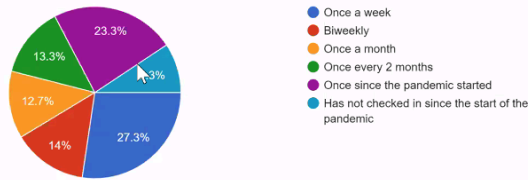
With the increase in cases, are you concerned about Yale going back to Phase 1?  
150 responses



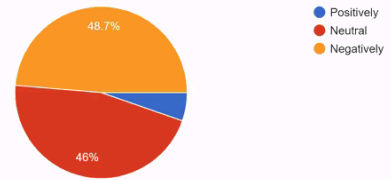
Communication with mentor seems to be a problem.

# Work environment and habits

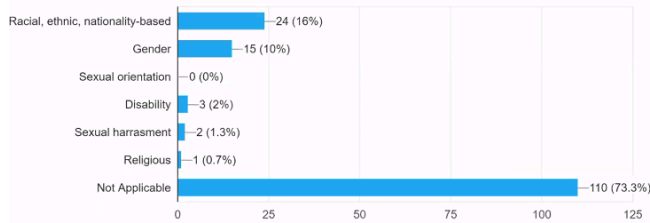
How often does your mentor check-in with you (re: mental or physical health)?  
150 responses



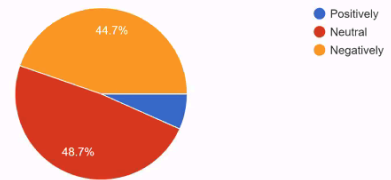
How have the altered work hours affected your sleep schedule?  
150 responses



Have you experienced any of the following forms of discrimination or harassment since the start of pandemic?  
150 responses



How have the altered work hours affected your eating habits?  
150 responses

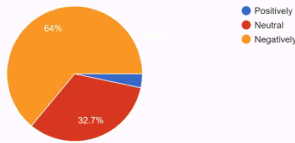


Many reported that the mentors did not check in with their trainees.

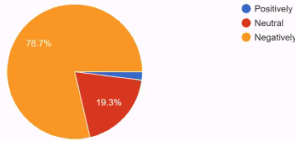
Some experienced racial discrimination: likely corona-related racial discriminations against Asians.

# Mental health

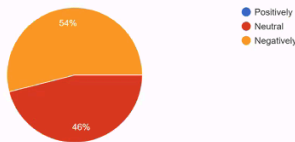
How has altered work hours impacted your mental health?  
150 responses



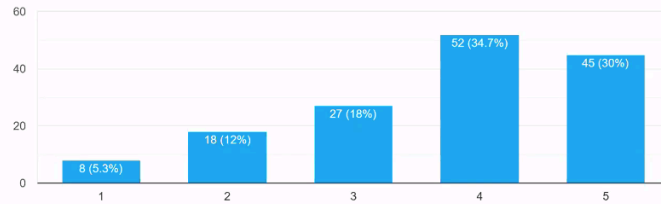
How have recent political issues impacted your mental health? (election, visa, etc)  
150 responses



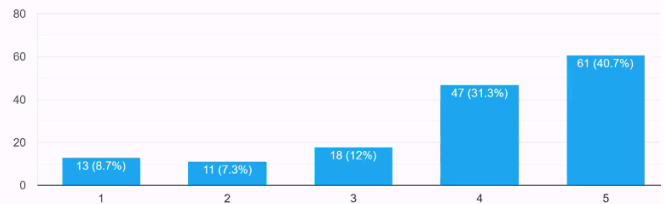
How have racial issues impacted your mental health?  
150 responses



In the past month, how often have you felt NOT confident about your abilities to manage work?  
150 responses



In the past month, how often have you felt guilty about your working hours?  
150 responses



## Concerns raised in comments

### Concerns:

- Several concerns about childcare and it's effect on productivity
- Concerns about productivity, the job market, retaining current position (contract extensions or funding)
- Work/life balance issues
- Isolation
- Travel and VISA issues

### Suggestions:

- Flexibility from PIs about productivity
- Support from Yale and from PIs (can come in many forms from administrative and departmental levels to monetary support via funding)
- Recognition – PDs want to feel seen by the university and PIs
- More childcare resources
- Job security – contract extensions and/or funding extensions
- Understanding from PIs that these are unusual times and that productivity cannot be similar to pre-pandemic times
- PIs must allow for work/life balance must be maintained for PD mental health
- PIs should check in with their lab for more than just data updates

### Suggestions for YPA specifically:

- More social/networking events – something to bring back a sense of community
- More advocacy



### Concerns raised:

PIs that are not flexible/understanding with current working schedule

There's no guideline on how PIs should handle the current situation.

Childcare issues

Job security concerns: we're currently trying to work with administrations to address this issue,

People want more social interactions.

We should try to talk with the administration, the OPA and Lynn Cooley to request more support to postdocs to alleviate the sufferings the issues pointed out above have been causing.

## Professional Development Committee [8 min]

1. February events:

- Plan & Manage Your Career Development (OCS with Brian) Introduction for Career cafe 02/16
- Pint of Postdoc 02/25
- 2. March events:
  - Fundamental of scientific writing with Angelika Hofmann 03/08
  - Pint of Postdoc 03/25
  - Career Café
- 3. Adair workshop:
  - Networking naturally co-hosts with Community & networking committee
  - Leadership style co-host with Communication committee
- 4. Organization of peer-writing groups

1. Plan and Manage your career development (2/16): focus on how to manage your career and how to have several plans. Introduction to career café( will be on march-will start with academia and industry.)

Pint of postdoc: occurs every month with different topics. The event is going to be advertised through Yale connect.

2. Scientific writing seminar is on 3/8 and another event on 4/28 on grant writing

3. Workshop fee is 500 pounds (690 dollars). We need the approval from OPA to purchase—one way to spend our budget. We also got good feedbacks from similar workshops previously.

4. We're organizing peer-writing groups for postdocs. Current one is only for graduate students. This will be a self-organized group so we won't have fellows from the writing center. We are thinking about collaborating with mentorship committee.

Anne mentioned that we need more information about the workshop; the occupancy and how the workshop will be organized etc.

### **Communications [5 min]**

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1. Introduce Communication committee members
2. Creating a comprehensive Yale Connect Guidelines manual
3. Posted events
4. Inclusivity/diversity posters to be posted around campus.

1. Welcome new members!

2. Alexis Denton is in charge of YaleConnect Guideline

3. Danielle Peterson is in charge of Inclusivity posters (print versions)

4. We're collaborating with Nicole to do leadership development events.

All February events will be on the newsletter. Please signup to stay updated.

The link to Gofundme page for Kevin is on YPA website and SNS.

If you need any help or support, reach out to the support line.

### **Community and Networking Committee [5 min]**

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1. Virtual Museum Tour
2. Science sketching workshop: 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition
3. Postdoc Speed Social
4. Treasure Hunt/ Outdoors social event

1. Planning on doing this event again at the end of this month.
2. Planning on doing it again. Will confirm the details with the chairs later.
4. Planning on an outdoor treasure hunt event in March.

### **Racial Justice Subcommittee [5 min]**

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1. New name for the committee
2. Newsletter and signup sheet
3. February events during Black History months
4. Future event plans collaborating with Students for Educational Justice and YBPA

1. New name! Trying to design a logo-if you have any idea, please post it on the channel.
2. We have a first newsletter draft for February. Newsletter and signup sheet will be distributed soon.
3. February events during Black history Month. Will host a space to discuss the events in March.
4. June events: we will partner with a New Haven community group, students for Education Justice in collaboration with the YBPA.  
YPA should also have a dedicated webpage for this June event.

Join the #blacklivesmatter slack channel or email us if interested in joining.

### **Symposium [2 min]**

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1. Symposium committee established
2. Welcome new co-coordinator Nicole Lake!
3. Registration and abstract submission will open before the end of Feb

Virtual symposium date: June 15,17

Registration and abstract submission will be open before the end of Feb.

If you're interested in joining, please contact us!

### **Open Forum - Questions/Comments [5 min]**

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**Overflow Discussion (optional) - Additional time if further discussion is required following any topic raised this evening [Anne will continue to host meeting for length of time that further discussion requires]**

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Anne shared YPA code of conduct; there are expectations for the people who join any of the YPA meetings or events. Coordinators should send it out to YPA members.

Research and advocate for public safety resources available at Yale.

Extend out Safe walk program to citywide to feel safer to walk to/from work.

There's been an increase in crime since last year. We should contact the Yale administration to suggest actions that can be taken.

YPA to advocate towards more public safety resources.

Reach out to Graduate school as starting point. Collaborate with GSA.

OPA update: They're looking for a full-time replacement for John Alvaro.

Currently what OPA does for Yale postdocs is insufficient. This is a good opportunity to put expectations on the function of OPA. YPA has taken over many responsibilities.

If anyone wants to discuss more about what you want from OPA, please reach out.

OPA will be absorbed by graduate school. They directly report to Lynn Cooley, who is aware of postdoc's situation. There'll be more support and programs for us since benefits for graduate students are better. The process might take 1-2 years.

Anne is cautiously optimistic. We want to have staff who is actually proactive and advocate for the YPA and postdocs. We need someone in the administration who will work for us to get opportunity to get more support.

Mental health report will be released soon.

Will discuss about which issues from the mental health survey to bring to the administration.

Smaller and more interactive social events are wanted.