***Prospective Student Frequently Asked Questions***

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**•Life at Yale, Wellness, and Student Groups•**

Yale aspires to be the most student-focused research university in the world. Yale’s commitments to teaching and student engagement are distinctive, as too are its activities that prepare and assist students to take full advantage of their educational programs and of the extraordinary strengths and assets of the university. Yale offers several programs and initiatives to meet these goals.

***Who belongs at Yale?***

Everybody! Belonging at Yale assists with fostering a more diverse, inclusive, and welcoming campus environment. This program includes understanding Yale’s history, building on efforts to assess our campus culture, increase financial aid, and identify areas for collaboration that address racism, injustice, and inequity, and making Yale a more welcoming environment by increasing excellence and diversity. You may want to read through President Salovey’s recent message regarding this program, found here: <https://president.yale.edu/president/statements/progress-building-stronger-and-more-inclusive-yale>. For more information about this program, check out the website: <https://belong.yale.edu>

***What kind of student organizations does Yale offer?***

The [Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS)](https://gsas.yale.edu/) is represented by an elected body of Yale students from every department under the GSAS. The assembly’s goals are to identify the needs and concerns of graduate students, consider possible solutions, and present these to the Dean and other administrators. They also discuss, propose, and advise on possible changes to Graduate School policy proposed by the Administration in bi-weekly meetings. All graduate students are welcome to sit in on the meetings and join the discussion! <https://gsa.yale.edu/>

Yale Chemistry offers a variety of student organizations as well, some of which you may remember from your virtual visiting day. Chemistry Joint Safety Team (JST), Diversity & Climate Committee (DCC), National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists & Chemical Engineers – Yale Student Chapter (NOBCChE), Professional Development Network (PDN), Social Committee, STEM Mentors at Yale, WISAY (Women in Science at Yale), Intramural Sports, and Open Labs. Find some organizational descriptions on our Chemistry website: <https://chem.yale.edu/academics/graduate-program/student-groups>

Yale Connect is the official community engagement platform at Yale University for student organizations. There are a broad range of interest groups and opportunities including affinity groups, volunteer opportunities, student government, and hobby interests. Yale Connect is a secure environment that can only be accessed with current Yale login information. For more information on Graduate Student Organizations, check out the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (GSAS) website: <https://gsas.yale.edu/resources-students/graduate-student-organizations>

***What resources are available for student wellness?***

Yale Well is an initiative for student wellness at Yale University. Whether you are looking to find clinical resources, boost your overall well-being, learn stress management skills, or find a community to engage with, Yale has resources to support students during their academic career. From mindfulness, to exercise, and financial health, Yale Well has both on campus and general resources to assist with improving and maintaining overall wellness. More information can be found on the following website: <http://yalewell.yale.edu/>

***What events happen at Yale?***

Yale is a campus bustling with activity and events. Just see for yourself by checking out the current Yale Calendar of Events here: <https://calendar.yale.edu/>. There is always a workshop, conference, seminar, exhibition, or performance coming soon, no matter the time of year. The opportunities for growth, learning, and exposure to new and exciting ideas is consistently at your fingertips as Yale fosters a positive educational environment.

**☞Helpful Links – Life at Yale, Wellness, and Student Groups:**

***What are some of the Yale-Well resources available to graduate students?***

*Being & Belonging at Yale (Cultural Centers, Yale Chaplain’s Office, Office of LBGTQ Resources, Women’s Center, Office of International Students):*   
<https://admissions.yale.edu/identity-culture-faith#:~:text=Yale%E2%80%99s%20Afro-American%20Cultural%20Center%2C%20Asian%20American%20Cultural%20Center%2C,identity%20and%20educate%20people%20in%20the%20larger%20community.>

***Can graduate students use the gym on campus?***

*Payne Whitney Gymnasium (PWG):* <http://sportsandrecreation.yale.edu/facility/payne-whitney-gym/payne-whitney-gym>

*Graduate & Professional Intramural Sports (IMs):* <http://sportsandrecreation.yale.edu/content/intramurals/gradprofessional-team-sport-information>

***Once I become a Yale graduate student, what Mental Health Resources are available?***

*Health & Wellness:* <https://gsas.yale.edu/resources-students/health-wellness>

***Can Yale accommodate vegetarian or vegan living?***

*Yale Hospitality & Dining Services - ‘Eat Well’ program:* <https://hospitality.yale.edu/eat-well>

<https://hospitality.yale.edu/eat-well/dietary-accommodations>

***Additional Resources:***

*Office of Career Strategy:* <https://ocs.yale.edu/>

*Student Health Education*: <https://yalehealth.yale.edu/directory/departments/student-health-education>

*Yale Student Life*: <https://studentlife.yale.edu/>

**•Typical Grad Student Day, Teaching, Lab Rotations & Work-Life Balance•**

***Is there a good work/life balance?***

The physical and mental wellbeing of students is a top priority at Yale. Students are encouraged to maintain a healthy work/life balance. Part of maintaining a good balance is understanding program requirements by reviewing the Graduate Student Handbook available on the Chemistry website portal for your incoming academic year and relevant deadlines.

The Good Life Center at Yale (<https://goodlifecenteratyale.com>) is just one resource that provides information to students on how to maintain a good work/life balance. Your peers and faculty understand the importance of balance as well and remain a dependable resource for discussion and suggestions throughout your academic career.

Upon arrival, the Chemistry department matches incoming 1st-year students with current graduate student mentors to assist with learning about New Haven, Yale, and the Chemistry department in terms of both the academic and social culture.

***What are the teaching requirements?***

Students are required to serve as Teaching Fellows (TFs) at around 20 hours per week for 2 semesters during their studies. Typically, teaching requirements are fulfilled in the first two semesters of study, but students on training grants and other funding sources may delay their fulfillments to a later year of study in consultation with their advisor. Students may teach additional semesters at the discretion of the research advisor.

The Graduate School requires all graduate students teaching for the first time at Yale to attend a “Teaching at Yale Day” workshop offered by the Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning. Students may take the workshop at the beginning of the Fall semester preceding their first teaching assignment. For more information visit <https://poorvucenter.yale.edu>. The Poorvu Center also offers in-depth instruction on fundamentals of teaching, advanced teaching workshops, teaching forums, and teaching consultations. A *Certificate of College Teaching Preparation* can also be earned for students who have career aspirations for teaching.

***What are the course registration requirements?***

All graduate students must successfully complete 5 credits of graduate courses (500 or higher level). Yale Chemistry offers a variety of courses that are half-credit classes, which provides greater flexibility in the topics that can be studied. Most courses should be completed in the first year of study.

***What is a typical day for a graduate student?***

Your day as a graduate student may differ from others as everyone has their own unique experience at Yale. Your ‘typical day’ may change based on your progress in the program, the time of year (e.g., mid-term vs. Summer), your involvement in student organizations, and the scope of your personal research. A primary factor that allows for work/life balance during your studies is accessibility to resources in New Haven and at Yale. Having a high walkability factor makes a difference in the variety of activities you can complete in a day. For academic purposes, you can expect to have a mixture of reading, writing, and data collection through lab work as well as teaching components as per the requirements listed above.

***How do I choose a lab and advisor?***

Research rotations are vital to the extremely important decision of choosing a research advisor (PI) because the advisor has many roles: providing guidance on courses, research direction, and professionalization, providing funding and space for research, providing regular feedback on your growth as a scientist, helping you to find future career positions, and forming a partnership for continued advice throughout your career. An informed decision uses information from several sources: watching research video presentations, multiple discussions with faculty members, reading of manuscripts from the research groups of interest, attendance at group meetings, visiting of group websites, and familiarizing oneself with the group culture and expectations of the research advisor through discussions with the PI as well as students in the research group.

Beginning with the third week of the Fall term, participation in a formal laboratory rotation is required. Rotation schedules vary between subdivisions. The content of the rotation depends on the student and the faculty member. At a minimum, the student is expected to visit the PI for an introduction and to meet a second time to follow up on the initial discussion. Rotating students should read key publications from the group, attend scheduled group meetings, and discuss ongoing projects with the graduate students and the postdoctoral fellows currently in the group.

During final advisor selection in the student’s first year in the Ph.D. program, every effort is made to match graduate students with their 1st advisor choice and communication about decisions remains consistent.

***Can I choose an advisor outside the Chemistry Department?***

Faculty members who hold joint appointments in Chemistry or are affiliated with the Chemistry Department through the Biophysics or CBI training grants can be selected as a research advisor, which requires no prior permissions. It also is possible to join the research group of a faculty member who is not affiliated formally with the Chemistry Department provided that the student works on a thesis project having sufficient chemical content and chooses a Ph.D. committee with two faculty having primary appointments in Chemistry. If a student wishes to join a group outside of the Chemistry Department, they meet with Chemistry’s Director of Graduate Studies.

***What should I know about Training Grants?***

An institutional training grant is an award that provides funding to support selected pre-doctoral candidates and/or postdoctoral researchers in a coordinated training program. It provides for stipends, tuition, and training related expenses. Institutional training grants are different from awards to an individual which generally provide a stipend for sponsor-selected individuals. Since most Yale’s training grants are from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), information about applying for and administering these awards is directed towards supporting those awards. More information is available on our website: <https://your.yale.edu/research-support/office-sponsored-projects/proposals/yales-nih-institutional-training-grant>

**☞Helpful Links – Typical Grad Student Day, Teaching, Lab Rotations & Work-Life Balance:**

*Office of Institutional Equity & Accessibility:* <https://oiea.yale.edu/>

*Fellowships & Awards:* [*https://chem.yale.edu/academics/graduate-program/fellowships-and-awards*](https://chem.yale.edu/academics/graduate-program/fellowships-and-awards)

*Yale Facts – By the Numbers:* <https://www.yale.edu/about-yale/yale-facts>

**•Family•**

***Does Yale offer resources for students with families?***

If you are a Ph.D. student with a child or children, we know that you have additional expenses. We want you and your children to thrive while you are at Yale and are pleased to provide an additional financial subsidy to assist you with family expenses. The subsidy is disbursed differently depending on the type of insurance coverage you elect. Ph.D. students receive a health fellowship that covers the cost of Yale Health coverage for themselves and their children. If you have a child or children under the age of 18, you may enroll them in Yale Health at no cost to you, and the Graduate School will also provide you with a family support subsidy to meet other family needs and expenses. All Ph.D. students with children under the age of 18 are eligible to apply for the family subsidy. There is no means testing, so you do not need to submit any financial documents to us, nor are you subject to income threshold limitations. There is only one family subsidy available per family, so if two Ph.D. students are the parents of a child or children together, only one student should apply for the family subsidy.

**☞Helpful Links - Family:**

*Ph.D. Student Family Support Policy:* <https://gsas.yale.edu/resources-students/finances-fellowships/funding-phd-students/phd-student-family-support-policy>

*Family General Information (Housing, Health Care, Auditing Classes, Employment Options, Privileges, Events, Forums):* <https://gsas.yale.edu/resources-students/families-spouses-partners-children>

**•New Haven Life & Local Activities•**

***What does New Haven have to offer?***

New Haven is a vibrant and thriving city with plentiful cultural opportunities. Access to world-class museums and theatres, galleries, libraries, and several symphony orchestras. New Haven offers more than 120 distinctive restaurants with a variety of international cuisines (and the world’s best pizza). New Haven has a variety of diverse neighborhoods, ranging from the bustling downtown to residential East Rock, all with easy access to New York City, Boston, and shoreline New England. There’s always something happening and something new to see around every corner! Yale also offers free admission to some world-class museums and galleries.

**Helpful Links – New Haven Life & Local Activities:**

*Yale Museums & Galleries*: <https://www.yale.edu/research-collections/museums-galleries>

*New Haven Arts & Entertainment:* <https://www.infonewhaven.com/arts-entertainment/>

*New Haven Events*: <https://tockify.com/infonewhaven/pinboard>

*New Haven Restaurants*: <https://www.infonewhaven.com/food-drink/>

*New Haven Dining:* <https://www.visitnewhaven.com/dining>

*New Haven Shopping*: <https://www.infonewhaven.com/shopping/>

*The Shops at Yale*: <https://theshopsatyale.com/>

*Connecticut Tourism*: <https://www.ctvisit.com/>

*New Haven Website*: <https://www.visitnewhaven.com/>

**•Outdoor Activities•**

***What is there to do outdoors in Connecticut, New Haven, and at Yale?***

At Yale, you have easy access to parks and other outdoor facilities, including [East Rock](https://www.newhavenct.gov/gov/depts/parks/our_parks/east_rock.htm) and [West Rock Parks](https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/State-Parks/Parks/West-Rock-Ridge-State-Park), which provide hiking and spectacular views a few minutes from campus; Yale's acclaimed [golf course](https://yalegolf.yale.edu/); the [Farmington Canal Linear Park](https://www.ctvisit.com/listings/farmington-canal-linear-park), a former canal and rail bed converted to an 84-mile biking and walking trail from New Haven to Northampton, Massachusetts; and [Lighthouse Point Park and Carousel](https://www.newhavenct.gov/gov/depts/parks/facilities/lighthouse_point_carousel_.htm), a picnic and swimming spot on Long Island Sound. [Roger’s Lake](https://www.oldlyme-ct.gov/about-old-lyme/pages/rogers-lake) in Old Lyme, CT is a great spot for students in the Yale community to enjoy getting together and for picnicking with a lakeside view.

Beyond New Haven and just a short train or car ride away, you can explore [shoreline beaches](https://www.ctvisit.com/interest/beaches) or visit the beautiful Connecticut countryside. Go camping at [Hammonasset State Park](https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/State-Parks/Parks/Hammonasset-Beach-State-Park) in Madison and enjoy the park’s beach areas and nature preserve. Visit [Guilford's historic Town Green](http://www.ci.guilford.ct.us/venue/guilford-green/) or shop popular outlet malls in nearby Clinton. In Branford, take a cruise around the Thimble Islands.

**☞Helpful Links – Outdoor Activities:**

*Yale Facilities for Activity* *& Sports*: <https://yalebulldogs.com/facilities>

*New Haven Parks & Rec*: <https://www.newhavenct.gov/gov/depts/parks/default.htm>

*New Haven Sports & Rec:* <https://www.infonewhaven.com/things-to-do/sports-recreation/>

**•Volunteer Opportunities•**

***What volunteer opportunities are offered at Yale?***

Yale believes volunteering is a great way to meet new people and support your community. Even Yale Alumni take on opportunities to get involved!

**☞Helpful Links – Volunteer Opportunities:**

*Volunteering at the Office of International Students & Scholars:* <https://oiss.yale.edu/campus-community-life/family/volunteering>

*Yale For Humanity Volunteering*: <https://forhumanity.yale.edu/volunteers>

*Future Leaders at Yale Affinity Group Volunteering*: <https://fly.yale.edu/news/volunteer-opportunities-get-involved-today>

*Yale New Haven Health Volunteering*: <https://www.ynhhs.org/about/our-community/volunteering>

*Alumni Volunteering*: <https://alumni.yale.edu/volunteer>

**•Transportation & Safety•**

***Does Yale offer a shuttle system?***

The Yale Shuttle System offers a safe and reliable mode of transportation for all Yale students. Fixed Route and Door-to-Door shuttle routes are available, as well as on-demand Safe Ride and Special Services vans. The Yale Shuttle website and Twitter account (@yaleshuttle) offers up-to-the-minute updates on shuttle locations. Various shuttle options run on weekdays, weekends, and nights. Shuttles are often offered for specific grocery runs (local Trader Joe’s) and for safe ride requests. Services are also available for students with temporary or permanent physical disabilities.

***How about travel by car? What’s the parking situation?***

Rideshares (Uber, Lyft) and Taxis (Metro, Yellow, and Ecuamex) are readily available in our New Haven setting.

If you choose to have a car on or near campus during your academic career, parking on campus often requires an application and permit and can be expensive (billed per academic year or by semester). Parking is free in many Yale lots after peak hours (starting at 4:00 pm). Off-street parking is free in many streets in the East Rock area. You can also park and take the shuttle to campus. Some streets may require a city parking permit to ensure residents have access to parking. Residential Parking Zones can be viewed on this site: <https://www.newhavenct.gov/gov/depts/tracffic/parking/residential_parking.htm>. Yale Parking & Transit Services offers more information about parking on their website: <https://your.yale.edu/work-yale/campus-services/parking-and-transportation-options/parking>.

***What about biking around New Haven & the Yale campus?***

Biking is a popular, healthy, sustainable, and economical way to travel around New Haven and Yale is a [Gold-level Bicycle Friendly University](https://bikeleague.org/university). There are plenty of resources to assist with your biking routes including a [New Haven Bike Map](https://elmcitycyclingwebsite.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/cityofnewhaven5.pdf), [Yale Bike Map](https://your.yale.edu/work-yale/campus-services/parking-and-transportation-options/bike/yale-bike-map) (bike rack locations, bikeshare stations, bike repair stations, and shower facilities on campus). Yale offers a coupon for a free bike helmet to participants of the 1-hour bike safety course through yale Environmental Health & Safety exploring helpful tips, maintenance, and sizing information. The Yale Bikeshare (8 locations) and Bike New Haven are two services in New Haven that offer Bikeshare membership programs (pricing varies based on membership – estimated $5 per 24-hour period for some memberships and unlimited free one-hour rides with $3 for additional hour on more complete memberships). There are several local trails to explore on bike ([Farmington Canal Trail](https://fchtrail.org/), East Rock Park), events ([New Haven Grand Prix](https://www.newhavengp.com/), [ConnectiCare Gran Fondo](https://www.newhavengp.com/connecticare-gran-fondo/), and [Closer to Free Ride](https://www.rideclosertofree.org/)), 3 local bike shops, a [Yale Cycling Team](http://www.yalecycling.org/), [New Haven Bicycling Club](http://newhavenbicyclingclub.org/), [Bicycle Co-op](http://bsbc.co/), and [New Haven Bike Party](https://newhavenbikeparty.wordpress.com/). There really is an entire culture devoted to biking around New Haven!

***Is it difficult to travel outside of New Haven?***

Traveling outside of New Haven is easy as well. [Zipcars](https://www.zipcar.com/universities/yale-university) and rental cars are readily available to explore greater Connecticut. Private Bus companies as well as Connecticut State busses offer a variety of routes and are great alternatives to cars. Trains are a large part of Connecticut’s travel infrastructure and railroad routes travel through major parts of Connecticut and into New York. Connecticut offers 2 airports and access to several major airports in surrounding states (New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island).

***How safe is Yale University?***

Safety is a top priority at Yale University and our campus remains as safe as any other urban space. Yale offers many resources and guidance including [Safety Tips](https://your.yale.edu/community/public-safety/stay-safe-campus/safety-tips) for assisting in ensuring property, holiday, phone/internet safety and more. Yale Public Safety website displays the available resources: <https://your.yale.edu/community/public-safety>.

***What resources are available for reporting emergencies?***

Emergencies can be reported through the Yale Police Department. Additional resources for reporting incidents of concern include Yale Police Victim Services, Sexual Harassment and Assault Response & Education Center, Domestic Violence Services of Greater New Haven, and Campus Lost & Found Services. <https://your.yale.edu/community/public-safety/contact-us>

***What are some of the physical resources Yale offers for safety?***

The LiveSafe App enables students to communicate with the Yale Police Department directly, request a walking escort, and share their location with family or friends when traveling between locations to assist with a safe arrival. <https://your.yale.edu/community/public-safety/stay-safe-campus/livesafe-app>

Our campus maintains several “Blue Phone” call boxes across campus, illuminated with a blue light. Pressing the red button directly connects with the University Police for emergency services. You may also request a safe ride or security escort at these stations. <https://your.yale.edu/community/public-safety/campus-safety-services/blue-phones>

**☞Helpful Links – Transportation & Safety:**

*New Haven Services*: <https://onha.yale.edu/our-city/living-new-haven/services>

*New Haven Community Information and Area Profiles:* <https://onha.yale.edu/initiatives/vital-downtown/community>

*Parking & Transportation Options & Contact Information*: <https://tst.your.yale.edu/work-yale/campus-services/parking-and-transportation-options>

**•Housing (On & Off Campus) & Cost of Living•**

***What housing options are available at Yale? How can I find housing?***

Yale Housing offers a variety of living options within our portfolio from dormitories and suites to one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments. We boast a diverse community of graduate students and their families. Among them you will enjoy a sense of community and belonging. We strive to provide a safe and supportive residential environment to enhance your educational experience. Yale Housing is a valuable resource for students to find appropriate local housing. More information is available on the Yale Housing website: <https://housing.yale.edu/graduate-housing>

**☞Helpful Links – Housing (On & Off Campus) & Cost of Living:**

*Graduate Housing Brochure*: [Gradhousingbrochure21.pdf (yale.edu)](https://housing.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/Gradhousingbrochure21.pdf)

*Dorm vs. Apartment Chart*: <https://housing.yale.edu/dorm-vs-apt-comparison-chart>

*Off Campus Living*: <https://your.yale.edu/work-yale/campus-services/campus-living>

*Resources (Housing License Agreement, Residential Handbook, Personal Property Insurance, Storage, Housing Map, Accessibility, Safety, FAQ’s)*: <https://housing.yale.edu/resources>

**•Entrepreneurship & Yale•**

***What resources does Yale offer for students interested in entrepreneurship?***

Yale fosters entrepreneurship and innovation through resources for students, faculty, and community members from skill-building workshops to project space and funding. For more information, please visit <https://entrepreneurship.yale.edu/>. To read more about the Yale Entrepreneurial Society, you can visit their webpage here: <https://www.yesatyale.org/>.

The Tsai Center for Innovative Thinking at Yale was formed to help students start scalable new ventures. This program has expanded into a year-round University Department, acting as a portal for entrepreneurship on campus and offering programs and events year-round that serve the entrepreneurial interest of students and the New Haven community. 840 office hours sessions were held in the last year with more than 100 projects catalyzed per year, and $1,015,632 total funding awarded. Check out the program for yourself: <https://city.yale.edu/>

**•****Additional General Yale Resources•**

*Yale Covid Guidelines:* <https://covid19.yale.edu/health-guidelines>

*New Student Information & Orientation:* <https://gsas.yale.edu/2022-new-student-information-orientation>

*Yale Mobile App:* [*https://communications.yale.edu/mobile*](https://communications.yale.edu/mobile)

*CBIC:* [*https://cbic.yale.edu*](https://cbic.yale.edu)