

understood to limit the allocation of university resources or supportive outreach from student-facing administrators to communities affected by political turmoil, natural disasters, or other events. Administrators engaged in such outreach should avoid expressing partisan political opinions when speaking from their institutional roles.

We recommend that these presumptions apply not only to university leadership (the President, Provost, other central administrators, and deans), but also to leaders speaking on behalf of other units of the university, including academic departments and programs.

Reasons for the Presumptions

1. University leaders should take active steps to promote the free exchange of ideas, a core element of the university's mission statement. When the university or its leaders in their official capacities issue statements on matters of public, social, or political significance, such statements may present risks to this exchange. When leaders speak on one issue but not others, some members of the community may feel marginalized on the ground that their concerns have been overlooked while others' have not. This risk may be compounded when sharp disagreement over events exists within the community. These concerns are especially acute in our age of social media in which statements become immediately and widely disseminated and commented upon publicly.
2. Statements made at the level of schools, departments, and similar academic units, particularly on issues over which there is sharp disagreement, may be especially likely to marginalize those who disagree. Members of the university community are more likely to be affected by what goes on in their units than by statements from the central administration, and they may therefore feel less free to express an opinion if their unit has taken a particular position. This concern may be especially acute for untenured faculty, for students, and for staff.
3. The frequent issuing of statements by leaders of the university runs contrary to the deliberative process inherent in study, research, and the production of knowledge, all of which are essential to the mission of the university. Leaders of the university at various levels can and should be encouraged to have the long-term interests of the university in mind and to exercise their judgment without the pressures imposed by

6. If leaders adhere to a presumption against statements, then the choice by leaders not to speak on a given topic need not be understood as a substantive position on that topic. Rather, the decision not to speak can be understood as adhering to the university's mission of promoting the free exchange of ideas and fostering research and education within the community.

Scope of the Presumptions

1. As specified above, the presumptions should apply to leaders at all levels in their official capacities.
2. At the same time, the committee recognizes that some units may have particular missions, in light of which a unit or its leaders may deem it important to speak out on a matter of public interest. But even in such cases, it is crucial that a unit or its leaders exercise judgment guided by the presumptions and reasons provided above. If issuing a statement in their official capacity, leaders should articulate the statement's connection to the unit's mission and explicitly acknowledge the diversity of opinions that may exist within the unit's community on the issue. Further, because anonymous statements can be in tension with the free exchange of ideas, units should refrain from issuing statements anonymously.
3. Leaders, including deans and department heads, often have academic expertise directly related to matters of public significance and therefore may be well positioned to express opinions on such matters. When they speak, they should note that the expressed opinion is based on their expertise and that they are not speaking in their official capacity. For high-level administrators, especially the President, it may be difficult to disentangle one's individual capacity from one's official position.
4. Members of Yale's staff may be called upon—by students, alumni, or others with whom their jobs require them to interact—to explain or offer an opinion on certain actions of the university or on certain matters of social or political import. Staff members do not have the same free expression rights as do students and faculty members. Consequently, unit leaders should give concrete and timely guidance to staff as to the scope and nature of communications appropriate to carrying out their jobs. Leaders of various units of the university should ensure that the hands of staff members are not unduly tied when it comes to engaging with students, alumni, or others.

The Path to these Recommendations

Our recommendations and the reasons articulated to support them emerged through the committee's deliberations, which were informed by many discussions throughout the university. The committee held numerous listening sessions at which faculty, staff, and students generously and thoughtfully expressed their perspectives on institutional voice. The committee learned a great deal from these sessions and from the hundreds of comments sent via the committee's webform from students, alumni, faculty, and staff. We also benefited from meetings with

individuals who have had