

FROM THE FRONT

“The universe is under no obligation to make sense to you.”

NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON AMERICAN ASTROPHYSICIST AND WRITER

No ‘going public’ with documents, anti-misconduct office says

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pitality employee whose report of harassment was dismissed by the OIEA. Suarez told the News that she had hoped revisions to OIEA policy would focus on empowering the office to take a more active role in preventing misconduct.

“The only thing you could come up with is confidentiality?” Suarez said.

New clarity

Before this update, the webpage explaining OIEA procedures contained only eight paragraphs and provided few details on what the office did after receiving a report of harassment or discrimination.

“The updated OIEA procedures aim to provide a clear and structured roadmap for individuals engaging with the office,” Myers wrote in an email to the News.

According to the revised procedures, someone who reports misconduct to the OIEA can seek non-disciplinary “informal” or “alternative” resolutions, or they can choose to bring a “formal complaint.” A formal complaint requests that the OIEA initiate an investigation against the accused party, who is referred to as the “respondent.”

In an investigation, the OIEA interviews the complainant, respondent and relevant witnesses and then produces an investigative report, which includes a determination of whether or not the respondent has violated Yale’s policy against discrimination and harassment, according to the revised procedures. If the OIEA finds that the respondent violated Yale’s policy, other personnel processes outside of the office determine any potential disciplinary action.

The revised procedures publicly describe this process in detail for the first time. Myers wrote that the process is “consistent with the internal investigation practices first developed by the office in 2021, which have been regularly reviewed and refined since that time.”

Confidentiality policy

The revised procedures also include new language that restricts the sharing of documents prepared by the OIEA in response to a formal complaint.

Under the new procedures, the OIEA now informs both the complainant and the respondent in an investigation that they “must keep all documents, including any investigative report, prepared specifically for the investigation strictly confidential.” Parties to an investigation cannot share the documents with anyone

except “their support person, family, legal counsel, union representative, or appropriate government agencies.”

“Alleged violations of the confidentiality provision are reported to the appropriate disciplinary body, depending on individual’s affiliation with the University (i.e., student, faculty member, or staff member),” Myers wrote to the News. “OIEA informs both complainants and respondents that violating this confidentiality provision may result in disciplinary action.”

Yale’s status as a private institution means that “they can set disciplinary policies with a great amount of leeway, without much worry of regulation,” according to civil rights attorney Alex Taubes LAW ’15.

The contracts between Yale and UNITE HERE Locals 34 and 35 — the unions that together represent Yale’s clerical, technical, maintenance and service workers — allow the unions to intervene on behalf of their members in any instance where Yale pursues disciplinary action.

“But if it’s a non-unionized employee,” Taubes said, Yale “could discipline them all the way up to firing, if they chose.”

The confidentiality clause permits sharing OIEA documents with some government agencies, such as the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

What the policy seeks to prevent, Taubes said, is “going public.”

Losing a tool for accountability

Last October, an investigation by the News found that dining staff felt neither the OIEA nor University leaders had properly addressed complaints of sexual misconduct by a former senior director of Yale Hospitality, Robert Sullivan. When reached by the News last year, Sullivan broadly denied the accusations without addressing them specifically.

The News’ investigation relied on OIEA documents to show how the office and University leaders responded to the alleged conduct. Those documents would now be subject to the University’s confidentiality policy.

In July 2019, the OIEA reached out to Vanesa Suarez after the office was made aware of a letter she wrote alleging that Robert Sullivan, then a senior director of Yale Hospitality, had sexually harassed her.

Yet less than three weeks after the initial outreach and without the OIEA ever meeting with Suarez, the then-director of the office wrote in a document — obtained by the News

and included in the October 2024 article — that she had completed an investigation and “found no evidence to support” Suarez’s account. The OIEA never notified Suarez that her allegations had been dismissed. Suarez, waiting for a meeting that would never come, gave up.

In 2023, the OIEA investigated a new complaint against Sullivan and found — according to another document obtained by the News — that Sullivan had committed “severe” sexual misconduct. Despite the OIEA’s finding, Sullivan was issued a new role as a “consultant” and remained listed as an employee until the News began reaching out to University leaders about Sullivan’s conduct.

Both Suarez and the other complainant, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said they shared their stories with the News because they felt that the OIEA and University leaders had failed to address Sullivan’s behavior. They said they felt particularly betrayed by Sullivan’s continued employment, despite OIEA documents that proved University leaders were aware of his conduct.

Myers wrote that “the confidentiality provisions do not prevent individuals from speaking about their experiences, but it does require that they maintain the confidentiality of documents prepared in the course of an investigation. This protects the privacy of all involved in an OIEA investigation, including witnesses who may otherwise be hesitant to participate.”

Without being able to share OIEA documents, Suarez wondered what mechanisms were left to hold University leaders accountable for their response to misconduct.

The confidentiality policy, Suarez said, means that “Yale is basically telling you, ‘You’re done after us. If we fail you, you can’t go air this out to the rest of the world — not just what happened to you, but the fact that we failed you.’”

Between January 2022 and December 2024, the OIEA received 545 reports of discrimination and harassment, according to the office’s data dashboard, resulting in 90 formal investigations.

In 10 of those investigations, the OIEA found that a respondent violated the University’s policy on discrimination and harassment.

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MAMDANI FROM PAGE 1

According to exit polling from CNN, Mamdani won 78 percent of votes from New Yorkers aged 18-29.

Critics, however, cited inexperience and unfeasible policy proposals as reasons why they were hesitant to support Mamdani’s run. Manu Anpalagan ’26, the president and founder of the Yale College Republicans, wrote in an email that he felt “disappointed by the false promises” Mamdani made “to voters about what he can accomplish.” Anpalagan, who is not from New York City, characterized Mamdani’s messaging as “ingenuine and dishonest.”

Avi Rao ’27, who is from New York but did not vote for Mamdani, said in an interview that he has doubts about many of Mamdani’s policy proposals, since they hinge on increasing tax revenue, which would be dependent on approval from the New York State Assembly.

Ahead of Election Day, a dozen members of Yale College Democrats, or Yale Dems, canvassed for Zohran Mamdani over the weekend. Maryam Abbas ’29, who does not live in New York but canvassed with Yale Dems, observed how many voters expressed their excitement about Mamdani’s policies, citing his plans to make the city affordable. Abbas also mentioned critics she encountered who had less faith in the campaign’s promises.

“There were some people who said, ‘I would never vote for that man, God forbid,’” Abbas noted. “There was one person, for example, who I was talking to, and she said that she likes Zohran’s policies, but she feels like it’s hard to attain his policies.”

Mamdani’s win on the national stage

Many students viewed Mamdani’s win as a promising shift in the overall national Democratic strategy. Brooklyn resident Maya Evans ’27 wrote in an email that she hoped his win would be “a big wake up call to the Democratic Party to get off their ass and do something.”

Yale voters also cited the city’s relationship with President Donald Trump as a factor influencing their vote. New Yorker Manu Bosteels ’28, who is an opinion columnist for the News, wrote in an email that “Cuomo has shown himself to be unwilling to stand up to Trump and indeed takes money and cues from the same people.”

“It’s felt really hard to be living in Trump’s America over the last several months,” Sonja Aibel ’28, who is from Brooklyn and is a copy editor for the News, said in an interview. Aibel said she valued the idea of “local gov-

ernment being a place where the values of that city can be upheld despite what is going on at the national level,” and hoped Mamdani could be a step towards that vision.

Rao, however, expressed concern that Mamdani’s election could bring too much federal focus to the city. Rao described Mamdani’s relationship with Trump as “overly combative.”

“You don’t want to be a collaborator necessarily, but being able to deflect federal pressure and run the city well enough that there isn’t this sort of eye on it, I think that’s the most important,” Rao said.

The future of New York

After Mamdani’s win, voters reflected on the direction New York is now headed. Bosteels praised Mamdani’s campaign strategy as a model for Democrats nationwide, specifically by “using social media effectively and clearly, and being willing to deviate from the stale monotony of mainstream Democratic politics when it matters most.”

Beber-Turkel wrote that Mamdani’s win can signify to the entire country that there is room for more leftist policies within the Democratic party.

“I think his election would signify to the US as a whole that there is a place for real leftism and that the enthusiasm shown for candidates like Mamdani will not automatically transfer to the least offensive elderly, milquetoast neoliberal selected by the DNC,” Beber-Turkel wrote.

Abbas reflected on her enthusiasm at being able to identify with Mamdani, New York’s first Muslim mayor.

“There’s so much excitement, especially as a Muslim, like seeing the Muslim community being really excited about the first Muslim mayor. It’s just so incredible,” she said.

Regarding New York’s relationship with the federal government, Aibel said that she is optimistic about Mamdani’s plans to fight back against pressure from the Trump administration, especially in what she claimed should be a “sanctuary city” for immigrants.

“I am excited about the idea that New York is picking someone who will really stand up to what’s going on outside of New York and will defend the things that make our city special,” Aibel said.

Andrew Bard Epstein GRD ’17, the communications coordinator behind Mamdani’s social media campaigning, graduated from Yale with a doctorate in history.

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Men’s basketball team will start season Friday

BASKETBALL FROM PAGE 1

a really good job of having someone ready to step up every year. There’s something really special about that.”

In addition to Townsend’s preseason spotlight, national media also picked Yale as the unanimous favorite to claim the Ivy League’s March Madness bid in the league’s preseason poll. Harvard and Cornell came in second and third, respectively. Preseason KenPom rankings also favor the Bulldogs. KenPom, short for Ken Pomeroy, is an independent NCAA men’s basketball database whose rankings are widely regarded as one of the more accurate predictions of seasonal performance.

Many of the traditional Ivy basketball powerhouses are reeling following a messy offseason. Princeton’s superstar guard Xavian Lee earned \$6 million in NIL and roster deals via a transfer to the reigning champion Florida Gators during the offseason, On3, a sports news site, reported. Cornell, last year’s Ivy runner-ups, graduated their leading scorer, Nazir Williams, and their leading rebounder, Guy Ragland Jr. Harvard, who returns unanimous Ivy Rookie of the Year Robert Hinton, also graduated two starters.

Nonetheless, the Ivy conference-play season is notoriously unpredictable. Before then, however, Yale will face a challenging non-conference schedule. Highlighted by preseason AP No. 15 Alabama (1-0), the Bulldogs will



The men’s basketball team will kick off their season Friday against Navy. / Yale News

have a chance to sharpen their teeth against multiple NCAA tournament-level opponents.

Another player that is expected to take a big leap in performance is 6’11 center Aletan. One of the first

big plays of Aletan’s career came in the final seconds of Yale’s victory over Auburn in the first round

of the NCAA Tournament, when he swatted two shots to clinch the win for the Bulldogs. Since then, he has emerged as one of the better defensive players in the Ivy League, making a name for himself on both defense and the offensive side with his rim-rattling dunks.

“This summer I worked really hard in the weight room because I want to enhance my physicality around the rim on both ends of the floor,” Aletan wrote in a text message. “On the court, my coaches have been great working with me to build confidence handling the ball and improve my touch in the paint.”

With the increased physicality and refined skills on the court, Aletan could become a force for the Bulldogs as they aim to repeat their past success.

“Having seen some of the past guys go through the program and have a lot of success, we’ve been given a great blueprint on how to succeed as a basketball team,” Trevor Mullin ’27 said. “Even though we have a lot of new faces on the court, I’m excited to see how we will work together to accomplish our goals.”

On Friday, the Yale men’s basketball team will open up its 2025-26 season against Navy at 8:30 p.m. in the Veterans Classic in Annapolis, Maryland. The game will be televised on CBS Sports Network.

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