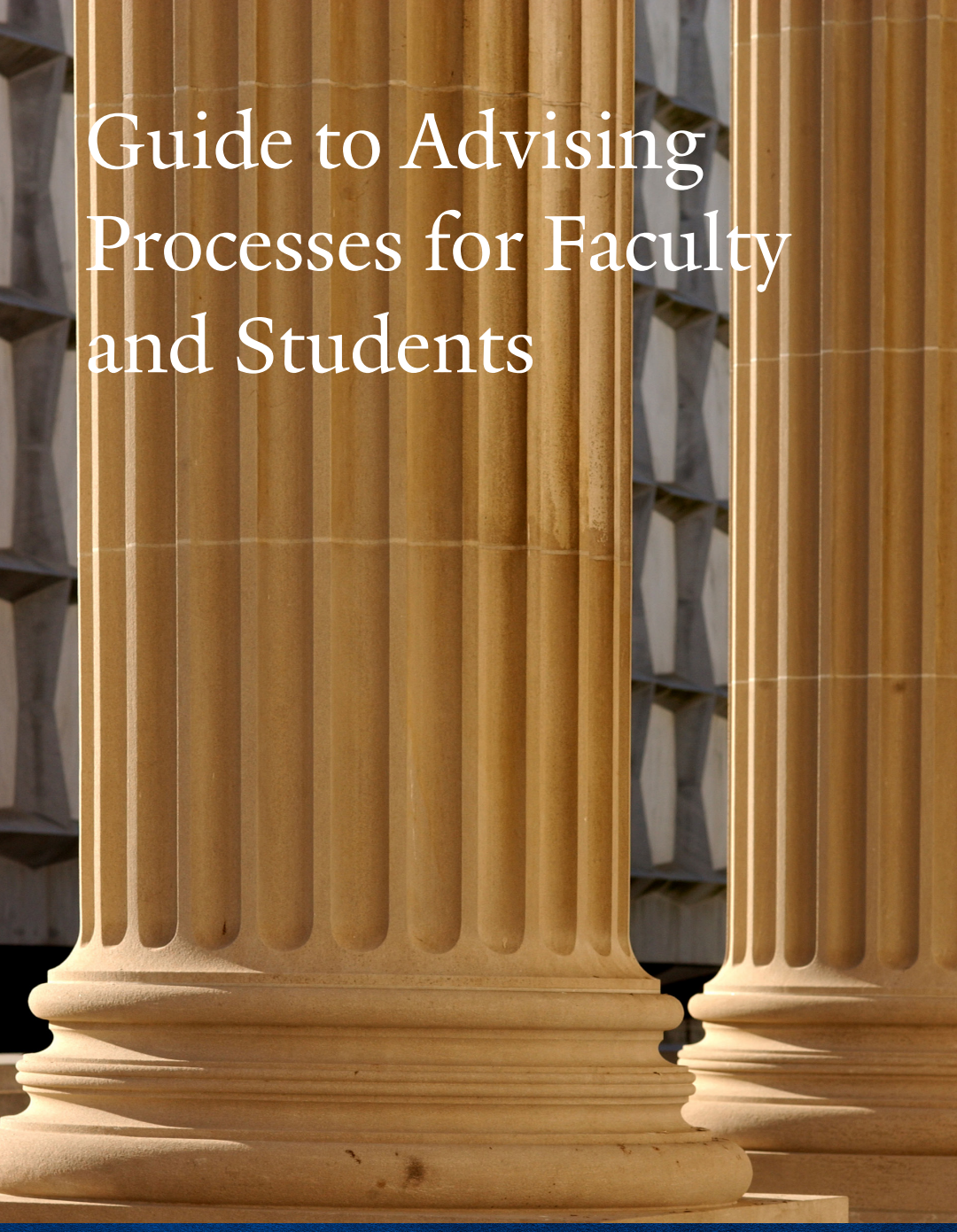


Guide to Advising Processes for Faculty and Students

Yale

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Acknowledgements

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A Message from the Dean

A productive, healthy relationship between faculty advisers and graduate students is critical for the completion of quality research, the professional development of graduate students, and the overall well-being of the university community. The nature of advising may vary across disciplines and degrees as well as at different stages in a degree program. However, certain shared values, goals, and responsibilities apply to all advising relationships. This document is intended to serve as a guide to best practices and a starting point for shaping advising interactions between graduate students and their faculty advisers.

We encourage faculty members to review this guide on a regular basis, to share their successful personal advising approaches with colleagues, and to participate in updating and refining advising best practices within their own program or department. We hope this guide will serve as a resource for faculty advisers who are new to advising, as well as for those who seek to improve their effectiveness as advisers.

Graduate students should review this guide to understand expectations and shared responsibilities in their advising relationships. It is also intended to be used as a starting point to discuss these expectations with faculty members prior to choosing a principal faculty adviser and subsequently, as needed, throughout their time in graduate school.

Note that the suggested guidelines and resources provided in this document are not meant to be exhaustive, nor do they replace department- or program-specific policies or procedures. Students and faculty advisers are encouraged regularly to consult the specific advising guidelines developed and maintained by their own department or program. Recognizing that advising best practices should be reviewed regularly and evolve over time, we invite any student or faculty member to submit additional suggestions for this central guide, which we will review and incorporate, where appropriate, at regular intervals.

Suggestions should be submitted to: gsas@yale.edu

I. Choosing an Adviser: A Shared Process

Shared Responsibilities in Advising

Students and their advisers share responsibility for ensuring productive and rewarding advising relationships. Both parties have a role to play in the success of advising. It is important to note, as well, that while students will select a principal faculty adviser who will serve as a primary point of contact as they navigate their degree requirements, Yale provides an array of faculty and staff who are able to mentor graduate students in unique and personalized ways. While this guide focuses on the academic advising relationship in the context of graduate education, students are strongly encouraged to cultivate a network of mentors who will support them broadly in their professional development. The Graduate School is committed to fostering an open, inclusive, and welcoming environment for a diverse student body. Accordingly, we recognize that students will bring unique and diverse experiences and professional expectations to the advising process. While some students will seek out an adviser with whom they have a strong affinity based on shared research interests or personal background, all faculty members can be effective advisers when they and their students mutually agree upon shared values, goals, and responsibilities. Individuals have relative strengths in their capacity for advising and advisers should be clear about what they can and cannot offer. **Part of effective advising is knowing when to refer someone to a colleague who might be better placed to offer advice and mentorship.**

The Director of Graduate Studies

When students begin their graduate education, the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), a senior faculty member appointed by the dean, provides general academic oversight and serves as a resource to all graduate students in their respective department or program. The DGS plays a central role in: (1) ensuring that departmental advising

functions smoothly and (2) advising students directly as they plan their academic course work and program. The DGS typically maintains a role throughout a student's academic career at Yale, although this role will evolve as a student advances through the program.

Selecting a Principal Faculty Adviser

Typically it is the responsibility of the graduate student, in consultation with the DGS and faculty, to identify a principal faculty adviser, though some graduate students will arrive with their principal faculty adviser already identified. Principal faculty advisers for doctoral candidates must have appointments to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences faculty. Traditionally the principal faculty adviser is a faculty member in the student's primary department or program.

As students advance through their degree program, the faculty adviser serves primarily to help them navigate degree requirements and support their professional development within the field. It is important for a student to consider their potential advisers' research interests and the kind of support they will need to achieve their professional goals. It is also important for the potential adviser and the student to discuss and determine how the adviser will support the student's professional development in line with the student's professional goals, as well as shared professional expectations about communication, submission of work, and feedback.

The process of identifying a faculty adviser varies by discipline. The first step is to become familiar with the work of the faculty to gain a sense of their past and current research interests and methodologies. As an example, in the sciences, laboratory rotations are common. For many other programs, it may be helpful to immerse oneself in departmental academic and social activities to see how faculty interact with colleagues and graduate students. Graduate students may also enroll in classes taught by faculty whose work most interests them and attend their public presentations. New graduate students should share their interests and ask advanced graduate students for suggestions about

whom they should meet. They may also consult with their DGSs about finding faculty advisers. Ultimately, they should schedule time to meet with potential faculty advisers before making a final decision.

Self-Assessment and Advising

Graduate students who enter their program without an identified principal faculty adviser should begin the faculty adviser selection process by undertaking a critical self-analysis. This process is intended to help students to understand what they need to thrive as graduate students before they can recognize who might best meet those needs. They should ask themselves, and discuss with people who know them well, questions such as:

> What are my objectives in pursuing a graduate degree?
>
> What type of training do I need to achieve my long-term career goals?
>
> What areas of knowledge and skills do I need and want to develop?
>
> Are there any aspects of my academic writing and research skills that I need to improve?
>
> What kinds of research or creative projects will engage me?
>
> How much independent versus teamwork do I want to engage in?
>
> What is my working style?
>
> What type of career do I want to pursue?
>
> What are my expectations for a good advising relationship?
>
> What kinds of support do I need from an adviser to help me achieve my goals?

Even students who have identified an adviser before they arrive will benefit from reflecting upon the questions above. These questions may help to guide the initial conversations with their principal faculty adviser. It is also possible that a student's interests and goals will change after they enter the program, and in this case it is important to engage in self-assessment to determine whether a change of adviser is something to discuss with the DGS and the faculty.

Correspondingly, before an initial meeting with a graduate student advisee, faculty may find it useful to reflect on their expectations for the advising relationship. It may be helpful for a faculty member to consider the following questions:

> What strengths do I value in advisees and how can I engage new advisees to identify their needs and interests?
>
> What are my expectations for communication/interaction with my advisees? For instance, how often should we expect to meet? What interactions should take place in person versus on email? How much time should advisees allow for responses to email requests? What is a reasonable amount of time to supply feedback on written work, meet recommendation letter requests, etc.?
>
> What is my mentoring style?
>
> Are there skills or areas that I could develop that would help me to mentor more effectively? Whom can I consult to receive targeted feedback on my advising?
>
> What are the key considerations for the professional development of young scholars in the field and how can I assist students in navigating these considerations? More specifically, what role can I play in helping advisees prepare for the academic job market and/or for other possible future career paths?

What backgrounds or identities are not well-represented in my field, and how can I encourage participation from a broader group of future colleagues and researchers? What skills are needed to support students of diverse identities and welcome them as future colleagues?

What qualities should a successful mentor/adviser in the field model for students and young scholars? How can I assist students in developing these skills and qualities?

Faculty Adviser and Graduate Student

Once the student and adviser have agreed to work together, both parties should be transparent about their expectations concerning the form and function of the relationship. It is important to discuss boundaries, both personal and professional, especially regarding communication and, where appropriate, collaboration on research and publication. Both parties must always be respectful. Being honest and open about expectations and ensuring that expectations align are key factors in determining the success of an advising relationship. Regular, transparent communication and check-ins on a mutually-agreed-upon schedule provide a framework for the working relationship to evolve as students advance in their degree requirements.

Graduate students should bear in mind that the principal faculty adviser should not be their only adviser during their graduate education. There will be numerous opportunities to build relationships with faculty members who may serve as secondary advisers, dissertation committee members, and/or dissertation readers. The principal faculty adviser can provide additional support by introducing their students to other faculty, students, alumni, staff, and colleagues who may also serve as informal advisers and mentors. As students advance through the program, their research interests and professional goals may also evolve and change. It is therefore essential for students to build a network of faculty advisers and mentors who can provide a

variety of perspectives and help them navigate preparation for the next stage in their career.

Changing Advisers: Resources and Considerations

In some cases, it may be necessary for a student to change their principal faculty adviser. Perhaps the student's research interests have evolved and another faculty member would be a better match for the student's intended project; perhaps the general expectations of the student and the adviser no longer align and it would be beneficial for the student to seek a different adviser; or perhaps the principal faculty adviser has accepted another position and will be leaving Yale.

Students considering a change in principal faculty adviser should revisit the self-assessment process to identify the support they need from an adviser to achieve their goals. Students can and should also consult with their DGS, with their initial faculty adviser (if appropriate), and with members of the faculty with whom they have developed good working relationships. Finally, they should also revisit the program-specific advising guidelines for their department for specific policies and processes governing adviser selection.

Addressing and Resolving Problems in the Advising Relationship

In the event that problems arise in the advising relationship, it is best to address them openly and promptly. In most cases, the first step should be for the student and the adviser to try to resolve the issue directly. Depending on the nature of the problem, it may be necessary to seek assistance from a neutral third party. Students and faculty should consult their program-specific advising guidelines for information about the lines of communication to address issues within the advising relationship. The DGS is often the first point of contact for students and faculty. Students can consult their DGS, their department Chair, other faculty members in their department, and/or deans in the

Graduate School for assistance with addressing issues related to advising. Additional resources to address issues or concerns are also listed in the Appendix below.

II. Advising Guidelines and Responsibilities

The adviser, student, and graduate program each bear responsibility for the success of graduate training, as described below.

Responsibilities of the Faculty Adviser

To assist in the intellectual and professional development of their graduate students by:

- helping students develop academic and professional skills expected by the discipline;
- providing written feedback when appropriate and in a timely fashion on students' written work;
- establishing reasonable deadlines for completing projects and assignments;
- establishing a shared expectation about the frequency of meetings and the modes/methods of communication;
- facilitating students' thesis research by guiding them to design relevant academic or research experiences;
- encouraging and modeling dedication to high quality teaching, research, and advising;
- encouraging collaboration that, where appropriate, entails the sharing of authorship or rights to intellectual property developed in research or other creative or artistic activity;

- encouraging students to be open about any problems in their work relationships, including with an adviser, and actively helping to resolve those problems;

- being aware of and directing students to university resources to support them through challenges (see Appendix);

- providing reasonable leisure and vacation time in recognition that success in academic work is contingent upon student mental and physical health;

- meeting with students to provide timely, regular, and constructive feedback on their progress. The frequency of these meetings should be agreed upon between the adviser and the student and revisited as the student progresses through the program.

To understand the academic and non-academic policies that pertain to graduate students, including:

- helping students understand the degree program's requirements and timely progress to degree requirements, such as coursework, language acquisition, research, examinations, and thesis or dissertation;

- discussing laboratory, studio, or department/program authorship policies in advance of entering into collaborative projects;

- informing students of their responsibility to comply with all university policies, including those pertaining to: Guidance on Authorship in Scholarly or Scientific Publications, Human Research Protection Program, Animal Research, Academic Integrity, and Title IX.

To prepare students to be competitive for future employment, by:

- promoting free inquiry and free exchange of ideas, while abiding by policies on confidentiality of research;

- acknowledging student contributions to research presented at conferences, in professional publications, or in applications for copyrights and patents;

- helping students prepare to participate in professional meetings, perform or display their work in public settings, and publish the results of their research;

- providing a realistic view of the job market and career options, including what is needed to succeed in students' career choices, or pointing students to resources that provide that information;

- respecting students' desired or chosen career paths, which may or may not be within academia;

- encouraging students to acquire the professional skills necessary for success in a rapidly changing world. This may include referring your student to professional development resources through the Office of Career Strategy and/or the Graduate School (see Appendix for relevant resources).

To maintain a high level of professionalism by:

- abiding by the "Yale Teacher-Student Consensual Relations Policy" as well as the official "Yale Policies and Procedures";

- abiding by the "Yale Expectations for Faculty and Teaching Fellows" while ensuring effective pedagogical development;

- excusing themselves from participating in committee or other decisions regarding any student with whom they have a relationship that could represent a conflict of interest;

• if a conflict should arise within the advising relationship, attempting to resolve the conflict with the student in good faith, and accepting a third-party mediator if needed;

• never impeding graduate students' progress toward the degree or toward employment to benefit from students' proficiency as teaching or research assistants;

• assigning, where appropriate, work beyond the scope of the dissertation (e.g., event programming, mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students, research projects not related to dissertation work) to promote development of important skills, while ensuring that such workloads are manageable and do not interfere with progress on their dissertation;

• being attentive to signs of trouble and approaching and assisting students they feel may be experiencing some type of difficulty;

• interacting with students, staff, and faculty colleagues in a professional manner;

• working to create and maintain a safe, respectful, and inclusive workplace;

• being attentive to their own biases and how they may impact the workplace;

• not asking students for inappropriate personal favors (e.g., walking dogs, child-minding, picking up dry cleaning, and unpaid secretarial or editorial work).

Responsibilities of the Graduate Student

To understand faculty advisers' central role, as well as constraints on their time. This includes:

- recognizing that faculty advisers provide the intellectual environment in which students learn and conduct research, and may provide students with financial support through access to teaching and research resources;

- recognizing that faculty advisers are responsible for monitoring the accuracy, validity, and integrity of the students' academic work, and, in the case of research, ensuring that the contributions of all participants are properly acknowledged in publications;

- consulting with their advisers before attempting to publish or present results of work done under the advisers' direction and/or in the advisers' studio or laboratory, as the quality reflects on students, faculty advisers, and Yale;

- being aware of time constraints and other demands imposed on faculty members and staff;

- understanding expectations about the frequency of meetings;

- taking the initiative to arrange meetings or communicate via other mechanisms with faculty advisers as often as needed;

- coming prepared to advising meetings;

- being proactive in communication with their adviser and prompt in responding to their adviser;

- keeping advisers informed of any factors that might affect their academic progress, including research or time to degree;

- consulting with the advisers to resolve any problems in their working relationships with their advisers or others, seeking guidance from other faculty or staff as needed.

To take primary responsibility for informing themselves about policies, requirements, and practices governing their financial support, degree and course requirements, research activities, and conflict resolution. This may involve:

- consulting their department's program-specific advising guidelines, the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences "Programs and Policies" bulletin, the official "Yale Policies & Procedures", and the "Yale Teacher-Student Consensual Relations Policy";

- abiding by university, Graduate School, and departmental policies and requirements;

- seeking clarification from faculty advisers and staff if they are uncertain about the precise meaning or application of a regulation or policy.

To maintain a high level of professionalism by:

- maintaining absolute integrity in taking examinations, creating original works and, for those doing research, in collecting, analyzing, presenting, and disseminating research data;

- responding openly and positively to fair and constructive feedback on work;

- giving advisers sufficient time to read and comment on work in progress and due notice for requests for letters of recommendation;

• taking special care to preserve the data collected during experiments or noted during research (with precise identification of sources) to avoid future confusion or disputes about access or ownership;

• acknowledging the contributions of faculty advisers and other members of the research team in all publications and conference presentations, and acknowledging sources of financial support;

• maintaining the confidentiality of faculty advisers' professional activities, including research, creation of original works and other creative endeavors, in accordance with existing practices and policies of the discipline; and discussing disciplinary norms around these issues with their adviser if these practices are not familiar;

• informing faculty advisers of conflicts and working towards a clear resolution;

• seeking the advice and approval of the principal faculty adviser, when appropriate, before taking on work beyond the scope of the dissertation (e.g., department event planning, peer tutoring, serving as a graduate student fellow for the McDougal Center, the Office of Career Strategy, or the Office for Graduate Student Development and Diversity) as this may slow progress on the dissertation work;

• interacting with students, staff, and faculty in a professional manner to create a safe, inclusive, welcoming, and respectful workplace;

• being attentive to their own biases and how they may impact the workplace;

• seeking assistance if or when problems arise.

Responsibilities of the Department/Program

To provide the tools, resources, and environment that foster healthy advising relationships by:

- creating an intellectual community where students, faculty, and staff of all identities and backgrounds can thrive in pursuit of academic excellence;

- creating and maintaining an environment where faculty, students, and staff of all identities and backgrounds feel welcomed, supported, included, respected, valued, and safe;

- introducing new graduate students to the policies, practices, and resources of the department and the university through an orientation or advising session and following up as needed to ensure students' understanding;

- providing students with documentation of departmental policies, degree requirements, and timelines;

- designating one or more members of the faculty as resources to help graduate students and faculty resolve conflicts (such as the department Chair, the DGS, or a designated departmental resource person), and making sure that these roles are clearly articulated in the departmental advising guidelines;

- resolving problems locally and quickly if possible; consulting with organizations listed among the additional resources in the Appendix of this guide as needed;

- providing guidance to students and faculty as needed (for example, if a principal faculty adviser leaves Yale, if the principal faculty adviser and student have irreconcilable conflicts, if a student wishes to change principal faculty adviser, etc.).

III. Post Degree Completion

Yale takes pride in contributing to the development of its scholars. In this spirit, we hope advising relationships and former students' professional involvement with Yale continue beyond the completion of the degree requirements.

Faculty Advisers

Faculty advisers' continuing role should be discussed with the student just before the student officially graduates. Faculty advisers are encouraged to continue to provide the following types of support:

- advice on publishing research;
- advice about professional and career matters;
- assistance in creating and sustaining professional networks;
- writing references in a timely manner.

Master's and PhD Degree Recipients

Former graduate students are encouraged to maintain ties with Yale by:

- completing post-graduation Yale surveys;
- providing the Association of Yale Alumni with updated contact and career information;
- serving on the Association of Yale Alumni Board;
- helping to recruit prospective graduate students;
- serving as a mentor for current graduate students;
- periodically conducting workshops and seminars related to career development or research.

This guide was adapted from numerous resources on advising including:

Advising & Mentoring. Stanford University Office of the Vice Provost for Graduate Education, vpge.stanford.edu/academic-guidance/advising-mentoring.

Cultivating a Culture of Mentoring. Duke University, The Graduate School, gradschool.duke.edu/professional-development/cultivating-culture-mentoring.

"Guidance on Appropriate Forms of Supervision of Research Degree Students." University College London (September 2016), http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/academic-manual/research-degrees/supervisor- guidance/forms#top.

How to Get the Mentoring You Want: A Guide for Graduate Students. Rackham Graduate School, University of Michigan (2011), http://www.rackham.umich.edu/publications/.

How to Mentor Graduate Students: A Guide for Faculty. Rackham Graduate School, University of Michigan (2015), http://www.rackham.umich.edu/publications/.

Best Practices in Graduate Student Advising. MIT Graduate Student Council & The Office of the Dean for Graduate Education (2015), http://gsc.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CommonValues_Brochure_Rev5.pdf.

APPENDIX

Additional Campus Resources

Faculty members and students are encouraged to seek assistance in improving their advising relationships and resolving any issues through a variety of Yale's resources and offices. These include but are not limited to:

Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Dean's Office
1 Hillhouse Avenue; (203) 432-2733
gsas.yale.edu

Office for Graduate Student Engagement and Development
1 Hillhouse Avenue; (203) 436-1301
https://gsas.yale.edu/resources/office-graduate-student-engagement-development-ogsed

Mental Health & Counseling
55 Lock Street, 3rd Floor; 203-432-0290
yalehealth.yale.edu/mentalhealth

Office of Career Strategy
55 Whitney Avenue, 3rd Floor; (203) 432-0800
ocs.yale.edu

Office of Institutional Equity and Accessibility
221 Whitney Avenue; (203) 432-0849
equalopportunity.yale.edu

Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning
301 York Street; (203) 432-4765
poorvucenter.yale.edu

Resources to Address Discrimination and Harassment Concerns
student-dhr.yale.edu

Sexual Harassment and Assault Response & Education (SHARE)
55 Lock Street, Lower Level; (203) 432-2000
sharecenter.yale.edu

Student Accessibility Services
35 Broadway (courtyard entrance), Room 222; (203)432-0825
sas.yale.edu

Title IX Office
William H. Harkness Hall, 3rd Floor; (203)432-6854
titleix.yale.edu

University Chaplain's Office
Old Campus, Bingham Hall, Entryway D, Lower Level; (203)432-1128
chaplain.yale.edu

University-Wide Committee on Sexual Misconduct
55 Whitney Avenue; (203) 432-4449
uwc.yale.edu

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