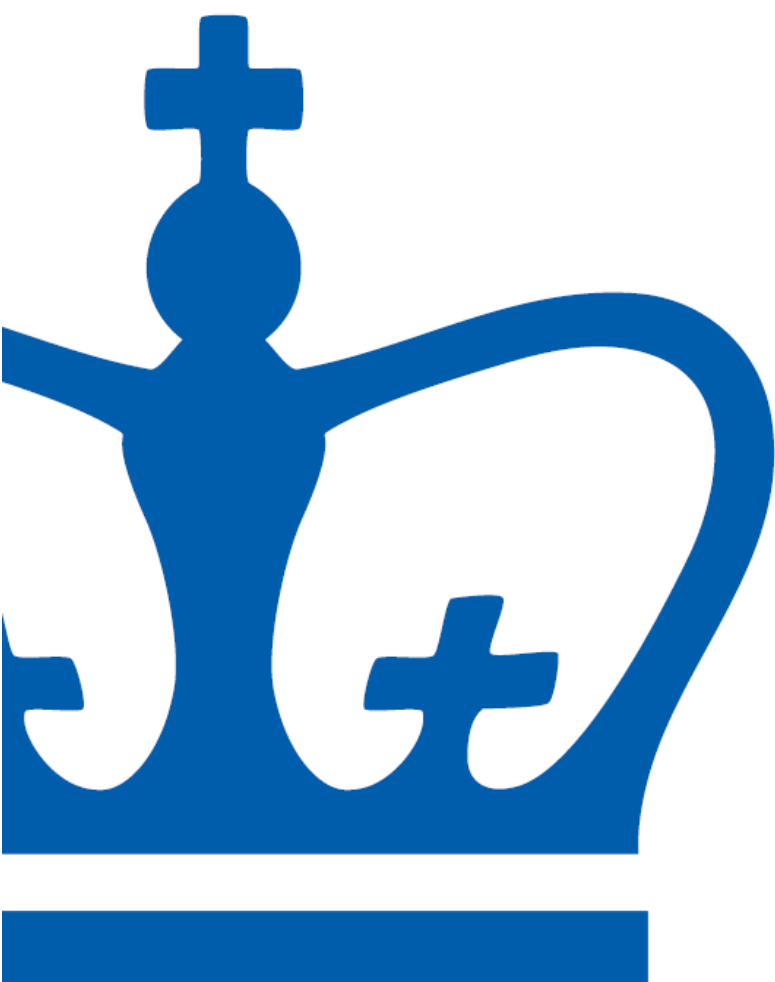


# University Senate Plenary

February 8, 2019



University Senate

Proposed: February 8, 2019

Adopted: February 8, 2019

University Senate Plenary  
Friday, February 8, 2019 at 1:15 p.m.  
Davis Auditorium, Schapiro CEPSR

AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Adoption of the minutes of December 7, 2018
3. President's report
4. Executive Committee chair's report:
  - Update on provision of sanitary items in university bathrooms: Sen. Zoha Qamar (SEAS)

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### MEETING OF DECEMBER 7, 2018

In President Bollinger's absence, Executive Committee chair Sharyn O'Halloran (Ten., SIPA) called the Senate to order shortly after 1:15 pm in 1501 IAB. Sixty-five of 106 senators were present during the meeting.

**Minutes and agenda.** The minutes of November 16 and the agenda were adopted as proposed.

**Executive Committee chair's remarks.** Sen. O'Halloran said the president was on the road working on the current capital fundraising campaign. She said the campaign was 60 percent of the way toward its goal of \$5 billion.

She asked Provost John Coatsworth to respond to any questions senators might have for the president.

Sen. O'Halloran thanked senators for the recent increase in committee and plenary attendance.

*Student Affairs Committee statement on a recent episode of anti-semitic vandalism at Teachers College.* Prompted by Sen. O'Halloran, SAC co-chair Kira Dennis (Barnard) read a short statement. There was applause.

*Framework agreement for union negotiations.* A senator asked about the status of negotiations between the University and the newly recognized graduate student union.

Provost Coatsworth expected meetings with union representatives to start soon. He said the National Labor Relations Board recently approved two distinct bargaining units at Columbia. One is a graduate student union, which includes teaching assistants and research assistants employed throughout the University, and is affiliated with Local 2110 of the United Auto Workers. The other, consisting of postdoctoral research scientists and scholars and associate research scientists and scholars, is affiliated with Region 9B of the UAW.

The provost said the first formal meeting would not take place until the end of February, partly in order to allow the University enough time to gather the documents and the data the union needs for its bargaining effort. The provost understood that the first contract in the history of a union at a workplace typically takes one to two years to negotiate. He hoped to beat that pace, but said talks would last as long as necessary during the next year and a half to get a contract that's fair both to the employees and to the University, that respects Columbia's academic mission, but that also recognizes that almost any benefit or

increase in pay that either union negotiates will redound to the University's benefit, because Columbia does not share its revenue or costs with stockholders. Any step that can make life better and more interesting for graduate students and post-docs increases the University's competitiveness in the market for the best minds in the world. Because the University and these employees have a fundamental common interest, he doubted that it would take a long time to achieve agreements. But it could take until the deadline set in the framework agreement—April 6, 2020. During negotiations there can be no strikes or other disruptions, a provision that the provost expected would be helpful to the community as well. He offered to answer questions.

Sen. Alfredo Dominguez (Stu., CC) reported the concern of some graduate students that the provost's office had bypassed them—the democratically elected bargaining committee—to bargain with senior UAW officials. Members of the bargaining committee felt blindsided by the framework agreement, which was approved in a vote of the graduate student body, but over significant opposition. Sen. Dominguez asked how this situation arose, and how the provost would make sure that such problems don't extend into the actual bargaining process.

The provost said he did not want to discuss intra-union disagreements, which the UAW and its various officials and members have to work out for themselves. But he said the University approached the UAW last September *not* in order to negotiate a legally binding contract, but to seek a set of guidelines acceptable to both the union and the University that would make it easier to reach an agreement as quickly as possible once bargaining started. The provost recognized that there was some discontent among members of the two bargaining units that this framework agreement was proposed without their input. But he said that since the framework agreement was mostly uncontroversial, he was optimistic that the Columbia community would have an easier time adjusting to a new way of doing business—with academic unions. The provost said the University and the regional UAW leadership were not trying to exclude union members, but to find a way to make it possible to achieve the goals that the graduate students and research officers have been seeking for the last three years.

Sen. Andrew Hsu (Stu., GSAS/Pure Sciences) asked why the framework agreement has a provision barring strikes until a certain date.

The provost said the no-strike provision is a standard feature of contract negotiations with American unions. Generally, bargaining takes place until the expiration of a contract, after which a strike can take place if there is no agreement. But before the first contract, no-strike agreements are often reached before bargaining begins. This has been the practice at some other universities.

Sen. Hsu asked whether the two unions would be bargaining jointly or independently.

The provost anticipated two parallel processes for the two groups, which would also include two slightly different bargaining committees on the University side. He was hopeful, but not certain, that such an approach would make final resolutions easier. He

said that an agreement with one group might facilitate bargaining with the other group. The parallel process would include separate contract ratification votes.

*Postdoc Award for Sen. Regina Martuscello.* Sen. Daniel Savin, chair of the Research Officers Committee, announced that Sen. Regina Martuscello, a Postdoctoral Research Scientist in the Department of Pathology and Cell Biology, had recently received an award for her work on behalf of postdocs, much of which was done in the Senate. The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs had conferred the honor—the Scott Smemo Memorial Postdoc Service Award—acting on the recommendation of the Columbia postdoc community.

Sen. Savin mentioned Sen. Martuscello's work for the Research Officers and Housing Policy committees and the Commission on the Status of Women, as well as a substantial report that she had presented to the Campus Planning Committee on facilities problems in some labs at the Medical Center. He also noted her work outside the Senate on the Columbia University Postdoctoral Society (CUPS), where she serves on the executive committee and as chair of the advocacy subcommittee.

Sen. Savin thanked Sen. Martuscello for her service. There was applause.

#### **Old business.**

[Resolution to Establish the Certificate in Comparative Media in GSAS \(Education\)](#). Education Committee co-chair Letty Moss-Salentijn (Ten., CDM) reminded senators that they were now getting their second look at this resolution, after voting at the November plenary to send it back to her committee for further review. She said that new programs undergo an extensive vetting procedure—two years in the case of the present proposal. The executive committee of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences approved it, the vice provost for educational programs studied it carefully, the provost's council of deans reviewed it, and a subcommittee of the Senate Education Committee and then the full committee voted on it before it arrived at the plenary for a final vote.

Sen. Moss-Salentijn said she was therefore surprised to see the comments that were submitted by the faculty of the Journalism School's Communications Ph. D. program. They should have been addressed two years ago, or at least one year ago, when the sponsors of the present certificate proposal invited them to meet.

Sen. Moss-Salentijn said the good news was that immediately after the last plenary there was a productive discussion that led to revisions in Whereas clauses 4, 5 and 6 of the enacting resolution. The proposal itself was not changed. She invited comments from Profs Noam Elcott of Art History, one of the program sponsors, and Andrea Tucher, director of the communications program in Journalism, who had asked the Senate to reject the program at the previous plenary.

Prof. Elcott thanked Sen. Moss-Salentijn for her work on the proposal, and also thanked Prof. Tucher and her colleagues for the productive meeting that reached agreement on the text of the resolution.

Prof. Tucher said there were a few missteps at the beginning of the process, but she thanked the Education Committee, the program sponsors, her senator June Cross (Ten., Journalism) and the full Senate for conducting a thorough and productive review.

Sen. Susan Bernofsky (Ten., Arts) asked for a summary of the changes that were made in the text of the resolution between the two plenaries.

Sen. Moss-Salentijn said she had been hoping not to have to go into the details. Her brief summary was that the revised resolution explicitly recognizes other schools at Columbia that have similar courses or programs in the field of comparative media.

Prompted by Sen. O'Halloran, the Senate then voted on the resolution, approving it 63-0.

**Adjournment.** There being no further business, Sen. O'Halloran adjourned the meeting at around 1:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Mathewson, Senate staff

**Sanitary Items at Columbia**  
*History and Proposal*  
October 2018

*Abby Porter, CC'17*  
*(Columbia College Student Council Vice President of Policy, 2016-2017)*  
*Zoha Qamar, SEAS'19*  
*(Engineering Student Council Vice President of Policy, 2017-2018,*  
*SEAS University Senator 2018-2019)*

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## Background

Over the last couple years years, members of Columbia College Student Council (CCSC), Engineering Student Council (ESC), and General Student Student Council (GSSC) have sought to provide free feminine sanitary items to all students in bathrooms on Columbia's campus. In Spring 2016, members of these undergraduate councils approached VP of Campus Services Scott Wright about a pilot program to provide tampons and pads for students at Columbia Health Services. During this time, 137 students went to Health Services in John Jay Hall and picked up 200 pads, 325 tampons, and 310 super tampons. Between September 16 and October 28 of 2016, 320 tampons and 196 pads were picked up from Columbia Health Services.

It is not just Columbia who has taken steps to provide free tampons and pads to their students. Brown University's student government began<sup>1</sup> a similar pilot program, staffed by members of their student government and fully funded from their budget, and it has now been assumed by the President of the University. Additionally, New York University<sup>2</sup> and New York City public schools<sup>3</sup> have implemented programs to provide tampons and pads for their students.

In the fall semester of 2016, members of CCSC drafted a more comprehensive pilot program to provide tampons and pads for students in one to two bathrooms in Butler, East Campus, Northwest Corner, Mudd, Hamilton, Carman, McBain, Lewisohn, and Fairholm. Campus services agreed to fund the installation of the stations in which councils put the tampons and pads. To address the cost and labor to re-stock the stations with tampons and pads as needed, CCSC members requested money and volunteers from within GSSC, ESC, and CCSC. Over the course of Spring 2017, students from the three schools re-stocked stations and collected data which ultimately revealed the need to expand access to free feminine sanitary items across campus. 17 bathrooms – including women's, men's and gender neutral locations – were stocked one a week by student volunteers. The weekly allotment of 17 tampons and 9 pads was depleted in full in many bathrooms – especially highly trafficked women's restrooms such as those in Butler, Hamilton, and Mudd – nearly week to week. After discussion with Campus Services and Health, one primary point of pushback from the pilot questioned the exact quantity of the need, as this crucial data point would influence the entire budget. In other words, though 17 and 9

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<sup>1</sup> Mettler, Katie. "Free Tampons for All at Brown University This School Year — Even in the Men's Room." The Washington Post, September 9, 2016.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2016/09/09/free-tampons-for-all-at-brown-university-this-school-year-even-in-the-mens-room/>.

<sup>2</sup> Brooks, Stephanie. "NYU Cramps the Cost of Menstrual Hygiene Products." Washington Square News, February 10, 2017. <https://www.nyunews.com/2017/02/10/nyu-cramps-the-cost-of-menstrual-hygiene-products/>.

<sup>3</sup> Mettler, Katie. "'They're as Necessary as Toilet Paper': New York City Council Approves Free Tampon Program." The Washington Post, June 23, 2016.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2016/06/23/menstrual-equity-ny-city-council-approves-giving-away-tampons-to-women-in-schools-prisons-and-homeless-shelters/>.

tampons and pads were used to depletion on a given week, just how many *would* Columbia need to provide on a given day?

Over the course of one week of Fall 2017, ESC stocked six of the spring's chosen bathrooms twice a day, to help understand a better sense of daily need in order to address this concern and estimate an upper bound of usage. By stocking 16 pads and 16 tampons every 12 hours in some of the most traversed bathrooms on campus, council members collected data that spoke to a clear need of these items. A few locations were even hitting 16-16 usage numbers by the end of some 12-hour shifts.

In our conversations throughout 2017, we requested that health services take over financial and logistical support for the program, by purchasing and stocking tampons and pads in bathrooms – and that the bins in which these supplies are held are permanently attached to the wall in order to avoid further theft of these amenities. We were not granted such requests on the basis of budget constraints, but we believe this is a University issue that must provide such resources to all members of the Columbia community, and thus we propose this project to be inherited by the Senate.

## **History of the Program**

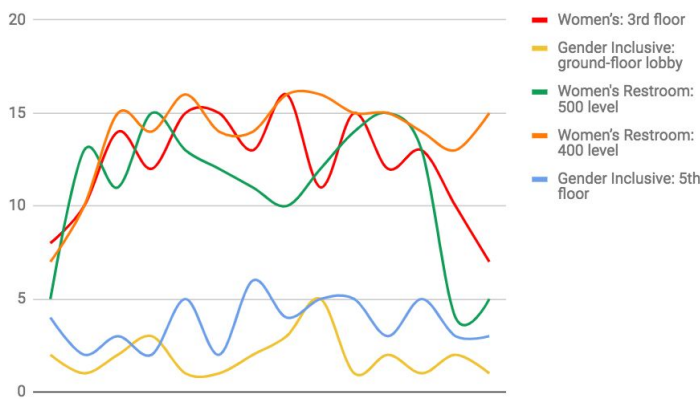
At the beginning of the spring semester, members of CCSC met with Dita Sali, Facilities Manager, to walk through each bathroom listed in the program. CCSC, in collaboration with Facilities, identified every location where boxes should be placed in bathrooms. After the boxes were installed, volunteers from CCSC, ESC, and GSSC began the pilot program to stock tampons and pads. Volunteers would pick up stock every Sunday, and stock bathrooms every Monday of the semester (with the exception of March 13 because of Spring Recess). During the first two weeks of the program, usage data was collected three times a week. During the next four weeks, data was collected twice a week. In the last six weeks, data was collected once a week, on stocking days. The spring program stocked up to 9 pads and 12 tampons once a week.

As a whole, the program ran smoothly. The volunteers went through an orientation at the beginning of the semester, and, therefore, volunteering was standardized. Additionally, every time stock was transported from the council storage closet to a bathroom, it was done so inside a plastic bag, so to ensure the stock was clean. Over the course of the program, there were a few challenges. Most saliently, boxes were removed from four bathrooms over the course of the program (Northwest Corner, Mudd, and Hamilton Men's Rooms, and Butler Second Floor Women's Room), and there are occasional gaps in the data because volunteers were not able to collect data on certain days. The councils also received feedback that, because stocking only happened once a week, there were often not enough tampons and pads for students to use. As a whole, the councils believe that the program ran as well as possible for a pilot program, and produced a large amount of data to build on in future years.

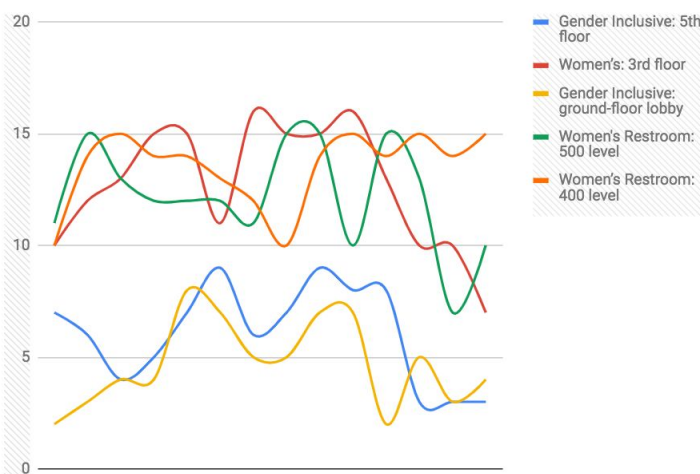
Last fall, ESC sought to shed more light on the actual amount being used per day in a select six bathrooms. These bathrooms were stocked twice a day, a Sunday through a Saturday, always refilled to 16 pads and 16 tampons. There were times in Hamilton and Mudd that all 16 pads and/or tamps ran out during one half-day increment. Otherwise, the data helps supplement the finding of the “upper bound” of pads and tampons needed in randomly-selected bathrooms per day. The one men’s room included (Mudd) in this sample size had its box removed mid-week, and so there is no data for a few days – we thus ruled the data for the purpose of the pilot inconclusive. The findings there are potentially inconclusive. That being said, women’s restrooms of academic buildings of high traffic (Mudd, Northwest Corner, Hamilton), saw significant usage, even on weekend dates.

### Summary of the Data, Fall 2017 – Budget Going Forward

Tampons Usage, Bi-Daily Fall 2018



Pads Usage, Bi-Daily Fall 2018



The budget is derived from these bi-daily numbers. Its breakdown goes as follows:

- The average of the bi-daily usage in the three women's restrooms of the Fall 2018 pilot are used to project the upper bound of usage in other women's restroom from the Fall 2017 pilot, as well as gender-neutral locations frequented by many schools
- The average of the bi-daily usage in the two gender neutral restrooms of the Fall 2018 pilot are used to project the upper bound of usage in other gender neutral restrooms and the men's restrooms from the Fall 2017 pilot
- Thus, this budget covers items for the following bathrooms, as laid out and stocked in Spring 2017

Below: Bi-Daily Data, Fall 2018

**TAMPONS**

	S1	S2	M1	M2	T1	T2	W1	W2	T1	T2	F1	F2	S1	S2	SUM
<b>Gender Inclusive: 5th floor</b>	4	2	3	2	5	2	6	4	5	5	3	5	3	3	52
<b>Women's: 3rd floor</b>	8	10	14	12	15	15	13	16	11	15	12	13	10	7	171
<b>Gender Inclusive: ground-floor lobby</b>	2	1	2	3	1	1	2	3	5	1	2	1	2	1	27
<b>Women's Restroom: 500 level</b>	5	13	11	15	13	12	11	10	12	14	15	13	4	5	153
<b>Women's Restroom: 400 level</b>	7	10	15	14	16	14	14	16	16	15	15	14	13	15	194
<b>Men's: 400 level (data inconclusive, box removed mid-week)</b>	1	2	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**PADS**

	S1	S2	M1	M2	T1	T2	W1	W2	T1	T2	F1	F2	S1	S2	SUM
<b>Gender Inclusive: 5th floor</b>	7	6	4	5	7	9	6	7	9	8	8	3	3	3	85
<b>Women's: 3rd floor</b>	10	12	13	15	15	11	16	15	15	16	13	10	10	7	178
<b>Gender Inclusive: ground-floor lobby</b>	2	3	4	4	8	7	5	5	7	7	2	5	3	4	66
<b>Women's Restroom: 500 level</b>	11	15	13	12	12	12	11	15	15	10	15	13	7	10	171
<b>Women's Restroom: 400 level</b>	10	14	15	14	14	13	12	10	14	15	14	15	14	15	189

<b>Men's: 400 level (data inconclusive, box removed mid-week)</b>																
	1	2	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Using the prices for the product used in the Spring of 2017 – i.e. the most cost effective cardboard tampons and pads we could afford, the price per item is \$0.13 for each tampons and \$0.14 for each pad.

I. *The projected weekly usage of a women's and highly frequented gender neutral bathroom is:*

- 173 tampons
- 180 pads

*The projected weekly usage of a men's or gender neutral bathrooms is:*

- 40 tampons
- 76 pads

II. *Thus, the weekly budget for a women's and highly frequented gender neutral bathroom would be*

- \$22.49 for tampons
- \$25.20 for pads
- TOTAL: \$47.69

*Thus, the weekly budget for a men's or gender neutral bathroom would be*

- \$5.20 for tampons
- \$10.64 for pads
- TOTAL: \$15.84

III. *Thus, the two-semester (30 weeks) budget for a women's and highly frequented gender neutral bathroom would be*

- **TOTAL: \$1,430.70**

*Thus, the two-semester (30 weeks) budget for a men's or gender neutral bathroom would be*

- **TOTAL: \$475.2**

*Bathrooms as part of the Spring 2017 pilot that we would like to see included in the first wave of this project*

- Lerner Hall Women's Restroom: 5th floor, just outside of the Black Box Theater
- Lerner Hall Gender Inclusive Restroom: 5th floor, just outside of the Black Box Theater
- Butler Library Women's Restroom: 2nd floor, East Side
- Butler Library Gender Inclusive Restroom: 800 floor stacks
- East Campus Gender Inclusive Restroom: 2nd floor, outside of the lounge, furthest
- East Campus Gender Inclusive Restroom: 2nd floor, outside of the lounge, closest

- Northwest Corner Women's Restroom: 500 level
- Northwest Corner Men's Restroom: 500 level (data inconclusive)
- Mudd Women's Restroom: 400 level, just outside of Blue Java cafe
- Mudd Men's Restroom: 400 level, just outside of Blue Java cafe
- Hamilton Hall Women's Restroom: 3rd floor, west side
- Hamilton Hall Men's Restroom: 3rd floor, east side
- Carman Hall Gender Inclusive Restroom: ground floor, lobby
- McBain Hall Gender Inclusive Restroom: ground floor, lobby, just past the guard desk
- Lewisohn Women's Restroom: 300 level
- Lewisohn Men's Restroom: 200 level (data inconclusive)
- Fairholm Gender Inclusive Restroom: basement, hall lounge (data inconclusive)

**7 bathrooms at \$1,430.70 a school year**

- **\$10,014.90 a school year**

**10 bathrooms at \$475.2**

- **\$4,752.00 a school year**

**TOTAL SCHOOL YEAR BUDGET REQUESTED FOR INDICATED BATHROOMS:**

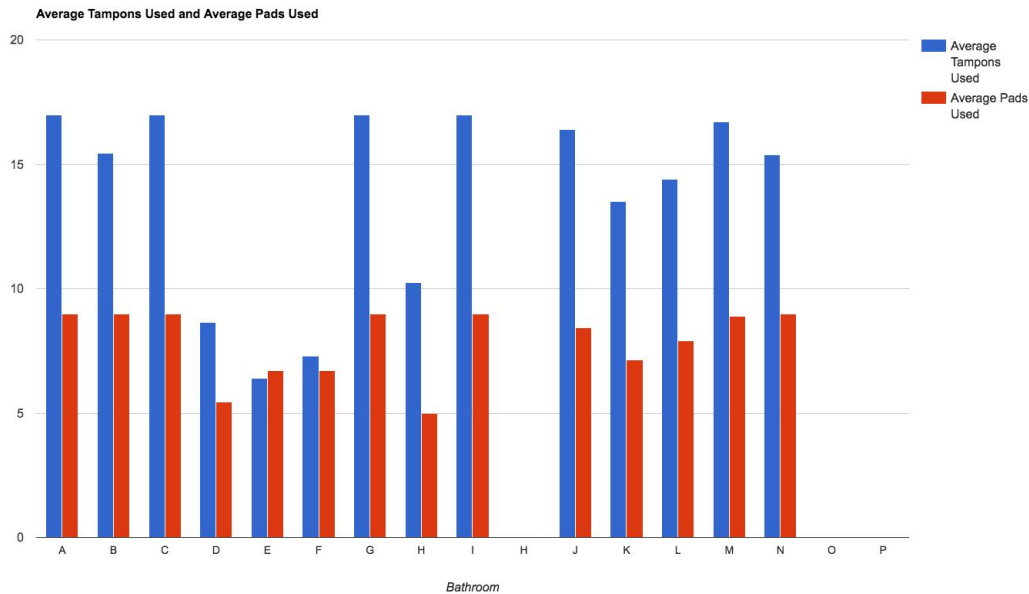
**\$14,766.90**

*For further analysis and explanation of the Spring 2017 pilot stocking these 17 locations, please keep reading.*

## Summary of the Data, Spring 2017 (As Presented to Campus Services/Facilities + Health)

A summary of the data is as follows. More detailed information on the program can be found in the appendix.

Graph of the Average Tampons and Pads Used in Each Bathroom, Spring 2017



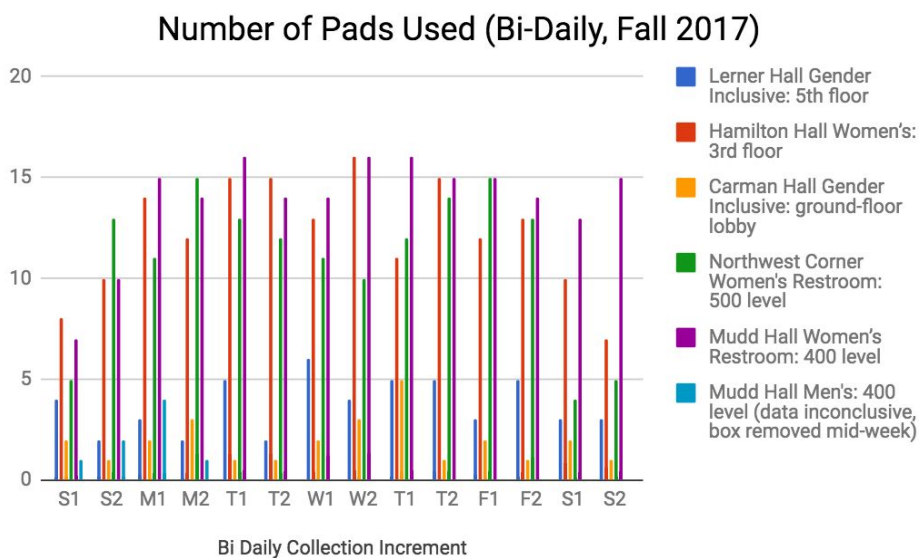
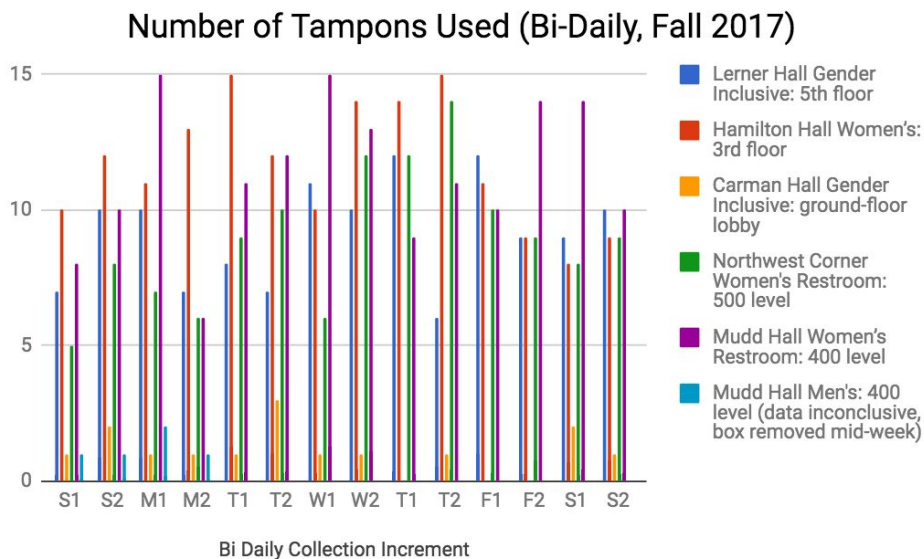
### Bathroom Index

- A. Lerner Hall Women's Restroom: 5th floor, just outside of the Black Box Theater
- B. Lerner Hall Gender Inclusive Restroom: 5th floor, just outside of the Black Box Theater
- C. Butler Library Women's Restroom: 2nd floor, East Side
- D. Butler Library Gender Inclusive Restroom: 800 floor stacks
- E. East Campus Gender Inclusive Restroom: 2nd floor, outside of the lounge, furthest
- F. East Campus Gender Inclusive Restroom: 2nd floor, outside of the lounge, closest
- G. Northwest Corner Women's Restroom: 500 level
- H. Northwest Corner Men's Restroom: 500 level (data inconclusive)
- I. Mudd Women's Restroom: 400 level, just outside of Blue Java cafe
- J. Mudd Men's Restroom: 400 level, just outside of Blue Java cafe
- K. Hamilton Hall Women's Restroom: 3rd floor, west side
- L. Hamilton Hall Men's Restroom: 3rd floor, east side
- M. Carman Hall Gender Inclusive Restroom: ground floor, lobby
- N. McBain Hall Gender Inclusive Restroom: ground floor, lobby, just past the guard desk
- O. Lewisohn Women's Restroom: 300 level

P. Lewisohn Men’s Restroom: 200 level (data inconclusive)

Q. Fairholm Gender Inclusive Restroom: basement, hall lounge (data inconclusive)

Graph of the Number of Tampons and Pads Used in Select Bathrooms over One Week, Fall 2017



“W1,” for example, denotes how many of the respective graph’s product of the first/morning Wednesday stocking of 16p/16t were used by the next data collection. “W2” denotes how any of the second/night Wednesday stock of 16p/16t were used by the next collection, etc.

The above graph offers a new, supplemental sample of data, which was a bi-daily stocking/collection that ESC conducted for one week this October.

## **Testimonials from Volunteers and Students**

Over the course of the program, twenty student volunteers put in time every week to stock bathrooms. The following are accounts from two student volunteers about their experience with the program.

*Zoha Qamar, SEAS'19*

Bathrooms stocked across campus included those in buildings both residential and non-residential. One of the initial pitches offered during CCSC's presentation of the program to Engineering Student Council advocated for the provision of supplies in dormitories, to ameliorate the financial burden that feminine sanitary items carry. This pilot program did not test the nature of this particular proposal, largely because none of the bathrooms stocked included regularly utilized ones of actual residence floors or suites, meaning the pads and tampons were not provided on a scale or at a convenience for such regular, ubiquitous use. This, naturally, was due to the sample size and budget the pilot program could feasibly manage. While the financial strain of feminine sanitary products remains heavy, this program's showcase of which locations' supplies depleted most quickly reveals another dimension of University-wide and University-provided sanitary product need.

Bathrooms A, B, C, G, I, J, M, and N (Graph: Average Tampons Used and Pads Used) illustrate a semesterly average of near depletion of all the supplies stocked each Monday. A couple instances include one pad or tampon left, but these locations, regardless, demonstrate a high need of pads and tampons. These bathrooms include those in busy libraries, dorm lobbies, and high-traffic study areas. On multiple occasions of restocking Butler's 2nd floor women's restroom this spring, I saw someone grab a pad or tampon as I was still rearranging the 17-9 combo neatly in the box. Twice, the woman who did gave me a passing thank you, noting something along the lines of, "Oh wow, phew, I didn't have one in my bag here." Studying in Butler regularly throughout the week, I observed the supply dwindle rather quickly, far before the next "check day," and often noticeably so within hours of the fresh stock.

Other women's and gender-inclusive bathrooms especially, in popular areas throughout Mudd, Northwest Corner, or Lerner (even Carman and McBain lobbies where many study sessions, classes, and open events occur), reveal nothing different. Financial barriers to feminine supplies still exist and need to be tackled in a larger-scale endeavor, one that exceeds a realistic student government budget. However, that doesn't change the fact that CCSC's pilot program has

evidently shown an explicit need for offering pads and tampons, particularly in areas that aren't currently equipped to help someone who may unexpectedly find themselves in a natural situation. In other words, when I am stranded in x-building or location with no feminine sanitary product or no one to ask, it does not matter if I have a huge stash under my bed or business-hour access to the drawer at Health Services.

In fact, the reason I avidly volunteered throughout the semester to stock was because (like any person who menstruates) I've had my share of experiences over time where I've been woefully blindsided and unprepared with no sanitary product. At Columbia specifically, I've had to leave a building for this purpose, in a case where I was working at night at an hour after the building's doors lock to the public/undergrads, thus surrendering my study environment. It is unfair to let this dynamic in any way skew the experience of Columbia students, particularly on such a scale that affects the University's entire population, even more so by such a biologically uncontrollable metric.

*Grant Pace, CC'20*

The new tampon initiative is critical for LGBTQ+ inclusion on campus. The program's involvement with gender-inclusive and men's restrooms provides basic fundamental hygiene to trans and gender-nonconforming students at minimal cost. Equally as important, it sends the message to these students and their allies that Columbia cares about all queer and trans students. Holding these identities can make navigating institutions designed around gender binaries difficult and degrading. Reforms such as these are essential for breaking down boundaries and creating functional and hospitable environments that destigmatize trans experiences.

*Christina Hill CC'19*

I have needed tampons on campus and haven't had them. At least 3 times a month. I think having these would be beneficial because it's such a basic necessity for female and many classmates. We would be able to concentrate on our studies more if we didn't have to worry about where we're going to buy expensive tampons. It reflects poorly on Columbia that they can't provide students pads or tampons for free—it seems as if Columbia does not care about its students' well being nor does it care about basic needs. Instead it focuses on more trivial expenses.

*Rebecca Magid CC'19*

There have been several times throughout my four years at Columbia when I have urgently needed a tampon/pad but have not had one on my person at the crucial moment. It can be pretty awkward to have to ask a stranger for an extra, especially since there is a high chance that they might not have one. It would be incredibly helpful to have access to tampons/pads on campus. Honestly, it is pretty surprising that Columbia does not have this resource already. As it is,

tampons/pads are so overpriced at pharmacies. The fact that the university does not provide them further punctuates this injustice. It is a health and sanitary issue at the end of the day, and one that the university should address.

*Liz Myrus, CC'21*

To be in the middle of class in a building without access to common feminine hygiene products is ridiculous, and throws off your whole day. It is such an easy thing for this school to provide, and would make the lives of so many students across campus so much easier. It's a simple fix that Columbia ought to pursue.

*Madison Harden CC'20*

It would address a lot of communities' needs (for example, First Generation and Low Income students). On a smaller level, the practicality of it is so clear. Getting your period is something you can't control, and it would be so much nicer to know that these products are much more easily accessible in a moment of need.

*Sam Safari, CC'19*

For the sake of inclusivity, four men's bathrooms were also stocked during this pilot program. There are several different issues that must be considered when evaluating the data from the men's bathrooms. First, the tampons and pads were often used in non-intended purposes. This includes students simply playing with the tampons and then throwing them away or using the tampons or pads as a hand drying tool. Second, only one of the four tampon and pad boxes remained by the end of the program (Lewisohn). In terms of student feedback, i received mixed comments from various students. Some were overjoyed by the push for inclusivity and some questioned the rationale behind placing the tampons and pads in men's bathrooms. With that being said, as one of the main people who stocked the men's bathrooms, I would argue that even if one student was aided in an emergency situation then our efforts were worth it.

CCSC also conducted a survey to assess student's reactions to the program. With over 90 responses, many students commented that they were happy with the program's implementation. Many more said that they wished more bathrooms were stocked and that they were stocked more frequently.

## **Request**

The pilot programs have confirmed that placing tampons and pads in bathrooms across campus is a worthwhile policy initiative that improves student welfare and promotes equitable access to resources.

Based on data for the program, we recommend that these bins be placed in high traffic bathrooms, including, but not limited to, buildings such as Butler, Lerner, Carman, Lewisohn, Mudd, Hamilton and Northwest Corner.

We request the school year budget of \$14,766.90 indicated for the 17 bathrooms we proposed, for these pads and tampons to be placed in proper dispensaries in the noted bathrooms, and for locations to be stocked via logistics coordinated by the University. This bare minimum request could perhaps be expanded to include more locations, as well as any possible upgrade in the type of tampon/pad provided.\*

(\*To note, many discussions with students, as well as data that pads are used more than tampons and general knowledge as users of such products, indicate that cardboard tampons are not the tampons of choice due to maintaining physical comfort.)

## Appendix

### *Notes:*

We understand one week may not be the largest, ideal sample size of time for the bi-daily pilot, but we underscore that full-time students with schoolwork, jobs, council commitments, and everyday lives were sacrificing the time needed to make this project happen. Even with that being said, we believe our numbers are indeed a fair assessment of an upper bound approximation of usage, and we use this daily data to help estimate a budget. Because usage was generally parallel between different locations, we find the data admissible for budgeting purposes.

We regret to report that the box fixtures holding the sanitary items in some men's bathrooms were removed during the process of this project. For these locations, some of the data is inconclusive, but we include our estimates of these locations in the budget, too.

We believe the provision of such products in all bathrooms, include "men's" ones, is critical in abiding by Columbia's mission as a haven and home for those of all gender identities. There are members of our community who bleed and identify with using men's bathrooms, and we feel it incredibly wrong to exclude anyone from the mission of this project.

We recognize that this proposal covers the financial cost of the products only – not dispensers – and that it does not account for the labor of filling the bathrooms. That being said, we believe the items are as necessary as is toilet paper in a bathroom, and we hope the product can be implemented into normal bathroom upkeep routines with that in mind.

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