

# University Senate Plenary

June 13, 2025



University Senate

Proposed: June 13, 2025

Adopted:

PROPOSED AGENDA

University Senate

Friday, June 13, 2025 at 1:15 p.m., via Zoom

**Registration required**

**After registering you will receive a confirmation email.**

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Adoption of the minutes of May 2, 2025
3. President's report and questions
4. Chair's report and questions:
  - a. Status of research funding
  - b. Update on the review of the University Senate
  - c. Update on Priorities Survey 2025-2026
5. New business:
  - a. Resolutions:
    - i. Resolution to Approve Proposed Changes to the 2025-2026 Academic Calendar (Education, Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure, and Student Affairs)
  - b. Committee Reports and Updates:
    - i. Statement on Protest-Related Disciplinary Proceedings (Student Affairs)
    - ii. Renewed call for transparency and accountability in the Hadden Case (Commission on the Status of Women)
    - iii. Update from the Rules of University Conduct Committee
6. Adjourn

Attendees to this Plenary meeting are reminded not to post this meeting, or any portion of this meeting, online as such a posting could result in a violation of the University's Acceptable Usages of Information Resources Policy.

### **Minutes of the Meeting of May 2, 2025**

62 out of 108 Senators were present.

Senator Jeanine D’Armiento (Ten., P&S), Executive Committee Chair, called the University Senate to order at 1:15pm. Sen. D’Armiento welcomed Senators and guests to the eighth Plenary of the 2024-2025 session. Sen. D’Armiento reminded attendees of the Parliamentary procedures and that recordings are not permitted in Plenary meetings.

Senators adopted the [agenda](#) for the Plenary.

Senators then adopted the minutes of the [March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Plenary](#) and the [April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Plenary](#).

Sen. D’Armiento then turned over the meeting to Acting University President Claire Shipman.

#### **Updates from President Shipman**

President Shipman gave introductory remarks and addressed the current challenges the university is facing. President Shipman ended by stating that she looked forward to celebrating the graduating students during the upcoming commencement. She added that she expects it to remind her that Columbia can rise to the moment. She acknowledged that a lot of difficult conversations lay ahead but can be solved through a shared sense of responsibilities. President Shipman then took questions from the audience.

Senator Oscar Luckett (Stu., CC) asked about the April 18<sup>th</sup> letter that was sent to the University community regarding the review of the University Senate and whether President Shipman would commit on the spot to maintaining the 26 student Senators on the University Senate. President Shipman stated that there was no agenda to remove students from the University Senate and that she was not personally running the review. President Shipman stated that she would not know why students would not be on the University Senate and has talked with the current Co-Chairs of the Student Affairs Committee about how invaluable the student Senators are. She ended her response by saying she could not commit to anything currently because she was not running the review.

Senator Joseph Slaughter (Ten., A&S/HUM) commented how many people were baffled how one of the first calls of a new Acting President was to call for a review of the University Senate. He added that he didn’t understand President Shipman’s comments about transparency when the listening sessions that were occurring currently were invite-only. He asked if President Shipman would commit to an actual open

conversation about the University Senate. Sen. Slaughter then asked about the consultation with the University Senate regarding the Presidential Search Committee. He stated that there was a report produced during the Presidential Search Committee that appointed former University President Minouche Shafik which has not been released to the public as promised. President Shipman responded that there will be Senate consultation with the Presidential Search Committee and that she believes that there has been good communication with the Senate Executive Committee in the past. Sen. D'Armiento added that the Senate had been consulted earlier that day regarding the Presidential Search Committee. President Shipman stated that she likely has the report that Sen. Slaughter mentioned and that she would work on getting it released. She stated that the report would probably be useful because many of the issues that the committee felt a few years ago were probably still in place. With regards to Sen. Slaughter's first question, President Shipman asked what format would be best to gather feedback about the University Senate. Sen. D'Armiento stated that when the Senate does a listening session they typically hold it in a town hall format open to everyone. President Shipman responded that the previous town hall that the University Senate held with members of the Board of Trustees was not productive and that exclusively having large sessions to gather feedback is likely not helpful. She added that she will take the feedback about the current invite-only listening sessions and consider a mix of formats. President Shipman responded to the concern that a review of the Senate should occur once there is a new permanent University President and not under an Acting President, stating that the repair work for the fractured Columbia community needs to start now and not wait until later. She stated that there was no reason to put these issues off.

Senator Mahmood Mamdani (Ten., A&S/SS) agreed with President Shipman that Columbia's community was highly fractured at the moment and that the University should take note of this and carefully respond. He also agreed that a review seemed like a good idea. Sen. Mamdani asked why the review process is not starting with the Board of Trustees, which are at the top of the University governance structure. He added that it makes sense to review starting at the top. Sen. Mamdani added that he had been part of many review committees at the University and himself been part of reviews by other committees and that he has always understood that the first step is a self-review and not a review by outsiders. He ended by requesting that there needs to be a self-review of a body at the University first before an outside committee makes changes to that body. President Shipman responded that the Board of Trustees does regular reviews of its culture and behavior, noting that there were massive reviews before President Shafik started her term, thinking about balance. She stated that a review of the Board of Trustees will not occur by the University Senate or the students and that this is not how the University works and that she has heard the feedback about how frustrated community members are with the Board of Trustees and the administration. She stated that the Board of Trustees has to work on communication and understanding so that there is better knowledge of what the Board of Trustees does. President Shipman stated that they are effectively doing a review of university leadership through the search for a new University President. She stated that any review of the Senate would not be conducted by outsiders but that the Senate is a representative body and that there are people looking at the Senate that feel that they would like to have more of a voice.

Senator Lydia Goehr (Ten., A&S/HUM) asked what President Shipman was doing to combat the forces coming from the federal government against the university. Sen. Goehr asked if the University is resisting the definition of antisemitism that the government was request that excludes Islamophobia. President Shipman responded that administration has very clear red-lines with their conversations with the government: academic freedom, issues around the university governance, how the university decides who can attend Columbia, and how the university decides what is taught. She acknowledged that there is likely more debate around the definition of antisemitism that the university should adopt. President Shipman stated that the Task Force on Antisemitism came up with a definition of antisemitism that she feels is highly productive but that she understands that many of these issues will require difficult conversations moving forward.

Senator Henning Schulzrinne (Ten., SEAS) stated that other research-heavy institutions have launched campaigns with their alumni to fundraise in order to ensure that research can continue and noted that he did not see any attempt by Columbia to do the same. President Shipman responded that the administration is working on a stabilization effort in the coming days but that the university has to look at the central funds first before doing outreach.

Senator Alex Rouhandeh (Stu., JOURN) asked President Shipman if she would commit to holding a press conference at Columbia. President Shipman responded that she had talked with the Student Affairs Committee Co-Chairs about a town hall but had hesitation after the last town hall but that she was open to answering questions. She stated that she is in the middle of talking to the federal government and that continuing those conversations first before holding an open forum would likely be more useful.

Senator Joseph Howley (Ten., A&S/HUM) asked if reform of the University Senate been presented by the White House or other parts of the federal government as a condition to move forward with negotiations. President Shipman responded that there has been an enormous amount of attention on the University's disciplinary processes, including involving Title VI violations, which directly relates to the University Senate. She stated that the legal liability is too great and that there can be direct government oversight on these matters. Sen. Howley responded that the Office of Civil Rights hasn't concluded the Title VI investigation yet. President Shipman responded that there was a lot that she was not going to be able to discuss regarding that issue. Sen. Howley stated that in the recent days in *The Observer*, it was reported that members of the board of Trustees had been in communication with lawmakers and the White House advising them on what demands to make of Columbia and how to make those demands, and Sen. Howley asked if these statements were true. President Shipman responded that this was absolutely false. She stated that she does not know if other members of the Columbia community were doing what was reported but that the Board members were not. Sen. Howley followed up and asked to clarify if President Shipman's statements applied to former members of the Board of Trustees as well.

President Shipman then left the meeting and stated she would be able to take questions at another time.

## Chair's Report and Questions

Sen. D'Armiento began her acknowledging the urgency of the moment and the need to address what is happening at Columbia, which she felt was a microcosm of the national crisis. She read the following statement: "As the federal government seeks to consolidate authority, silence independent voices, weaken institutions, and disregard checks and balances, a similar process is unfolding here at Columbia. Former President Bollinger, who has presided over this body, recently remarked, 'We're in the midst of an authoritarian takeover of the U.S. government ... We cannot get ourselves to see how this is going to unfold in its most frightening versions ... You neutralize the branches of government, you neutralize the media; you neutralize universities, and you're on your way. We're beginning to see the effects on universities. It's very, very frightening.' Columbia University, a 270-year-old institution and the fifth-oldest institution of higher education in the United States, is being neutralized by forces both external and internal. We have watched while our leadership bowed to a government intent on portraying universities as 'the enemy' and punishing students to the extent that current and former students who are permanent residents, Mahmoud Khalil and Mohsen Mahdawi, were unlawfully detained. Many students live in fear now that they could be next. An Acting President, serving in an ostensibly temporary role, is enacting broad, sweeping, long-term changes to the very fabric of our institution. The Statutes are being disregarded, unilaterally rewritten, and an opaque 'review' of the University Senate is proceeding despite widespread community backlash. This 'review' began this week with small, select, invitation-only listening sessions that initially excluded students. Let us not be fooled by the language of 'reform,' 'restructuring,' and 'review.' These are the first steps in the dissolution of shared governance at Columbia. The Board of Trustees and their Acting President aim to consolidate power and silence dissenting voices. The University Senate is under threat because democracy itself is being assaulted, and there are individuals in power at this institution who are not only complicit but welcoming of federal encroachment on our independence. Columbia's capitulation is not about maintaining our financial standing or the federal government's demands. Our leadership is making choices to restructure our institution because this moment grants them the opportunity to do so. Federal pressure is a convenient excuse. I would like to address some of these issues. The process to discredit our body didn't begin this spring. It has been ongoing and persistent as the result of our advocacy for due process, our oversight of other governing bodies, and our commitment to truth and transparency. Members of the University Senate have faced doxxing and death threats since last year. We are a community of independent, thoughtful, deliberative, engaged, and informed leaders. Committed members of the Senate give everything that we have to this institution. Over the past two years, we have hosted 6,500 participants at our plenary meetings, the minutes of which are publicly available. In addition to our broad governing responsibilities, we meet the moment and respond to urgent crises. This spring, we held four townhalls, with over 1,200 participants. At some of the most challenging moments in recent months, these have served as the only venue for concerned members of our community to air grievances and ask questions. We listen to and are responsive to our constituents. In the proposal to establish this body, its authors stated that the effort to create a University Senate was not a 'crisis proposal aimed merely at restoring confidence,' but 'the result of a painstaking and serious endeavor to build for the future so that we may more fully realize the idea of a University.' The authors of the proposal continued: 'We see the University as a place for the confrontation of issues

by reason and discourse – not for the confrontation of hostile groups in political passion; as a place for learning and research – not as a place for dogma and denunciation; as a place for service to society, not in its partisan struggles, but in its struggles to grow into a new and challenging age, linking past and future.’ That is a noble vision that deserves our support more than ever in the face of rising authoritarianism. We’ve heard concerns and misinformation about underrepresentation at the Medical Center as a reason to restructure the University Senate. Nine senators represent over 200 tenured faculty at the Medical Center. Most importantly, at the Medical Center tenure has been declining and there has been an exponential increase in off-track faculty who serve with yearly contracts. The University Senate is concerned about the diminished tenure-track and tenured faculty at the Medical Center and will work to address this untenable contract-situation. Although the Senate does not have regulatory power over individual schools, we will work on this issue to ensure the Medical Center can support faculty properly through defending tenured positions. I joined the Senate as a representative of the Medical Center and worked for five years to extend notice periods for non-renewal, which now only one year. This work continues more importantly than ever. The University Senate has also faced criticism for being too slow in its handling of certain disciplinary cases, which took an exceedingly long 11 months to resolve. It would take me the entire plenary to explain the details of why this happened. Much of the delay is the result of the cases being sent to the wrong disciplinary body, which meant the University Judicial Board did not receive the cases for over five months. Additionally, there were delays due to proceedings in the New York State Supreme Court, which of course we had no control over. Many of us in this room are familiar with these unfolding issues, but the criticisms of this delay conveniently leave out these details to our community. Members of the community may not have been informed about these issues because they are confidential. None of this is to suggest that the Senate is perfect. Like all institutions, it has its challenges and flaws. But in a University with tens of thousands of students and employees, the Senate has provided the sole forum in which faculty, students, and staff can come together to work through their common challenges and exercise some collective voice. We saved faculty pensions during COVID and helped the University navigate the pandemic crisis. We demanded an investigation of the Hadden case, which the administration continues to withhold from the community. We enacted the Code of Academic Freedom and Tenure in the University Statutes in 1972, which both affirmed academic freedom as a right of faculty and specified details of the tenure process. We carefully documented and analyzed the past few years and published the first account of this important moment in Columbia’s history in the Sundial Report. We have executed our authority, while limited by the constraints of creating and executing policy on our own, to make real and lasting change here. It’s easy and politically convenient to place blame on the Senate for the difficulties we have experienced as a community the past few years – hard, and more regarding, to focus on how we can rebuild and secure the future of Columbia. We cannot allow the short-term thinking of a small, undemocratic, self-perpetuating group – one that has repeatedly led the University astray in recent years – to undermine ‘the serious and painstaking endeavor’ that created this body. President Bollinger served 22 years. In the 22 months since, we have seen three Presidents. Perhaps we should all reflect on the common denominator in crisis after crisis the past two years: an unaccountable Board whose leadership has remained unchanged – a group that insulates itself from criticism, community opinion, and academic values. For those of us who simply want to ‘return to research,’ our research funding has not been restored.

Like many of our colleagues, my NIH funding was illegally terminated this spring by the federal government. What is the University leadership doing to rectify this? Our top priority must be to reclaim control of the University from authoritarian influences, both on campus and in the federal government. It has become abundantly clear that the only way our leadership will do what's right for the long-term future of the University is if we compel them to do so. Let us unite with the rest of the academy to defend democracy, academic freedom, and our educational purpose. Our research missions, the rule of law, and our independence deserve our vigorous defense. Let us now discuss what is most important: the future of Columbia University. Although we will continue to reflect and rectify upon the mistakes of the past, it is high time that all of our University leadership be focused on a positive, constructive, and exciting future for a University that continues to be a leader in higher education. Let us continue to rise up to the challenge and lead with integrity, truth, and honor for this institution.” Sen. D’Armiento went over the agenda and then took questions from Senators.

Senator Jeffery Gordon (Ten., LAW) stated that Stand Columbia Presented a Sunlight Report in repose the University Senate’s [Sundial Report](#) and asked about the concerns raised in the Sunlight Report. Sen. D’Armiento stated that they had received the Sunlight Report a few days prior and were reviewing it. She clarified that the Sunlight Report was a tracked-changed document of the Sundial Report, which made it easier to review and pinpoint exactly where there are concerns.

Senator Ovita Williams (TTOT, SSW) read a statement from a Tenured faculty member: “Colleagues, I rise to speak plainly and urgently. We are witnessing an assault on shared governance under the guise of reform. The Acting President, until recently, Co-Chair of the Board of Trustees, has announced a review of the Senate as the last institution at Columbia where faculty, students, and staff still have a voice. Let’s be clear, this is not about strengthening democracy. It’s about consolidating control. It comes at a time when powerful forces inside and outside the university are aligned with political efforts to silence higher education, to punish dissent, and to suppress the critical voices a university is meant to protect. But history tells us something else. This Senate was born out of the crisis of 1968 when students and faculty rose up to demand accountability, justice, and inclusion. It was this Senate that secured voting rights for students and non-tenured faculty that led the way in establishing grievance procedures, that fought for academic freedom and that created structures for anti-discrimination policies long before they were mandated by law. The Senate spoke out for divestment from apartheid South Africa. It defended the rights of international scholars after 9/11. It shepherded this university through the pandemic. It has been, time and again, the conscience of Columbia, and so I appeal to the conscience of the Acting President. Trust this Senate, honor its leadership. We have led in moments of crisis and complexity before. We don’t need less democracy. We need more. I call on every member of this Senate and our Columbia community to defend its independence, to resist any effort to make this body a tool of administrative authority, and to insist that any review of the Senate be led by the Senate itself. This is not just about policy, it is about the soul of the university. Thank you.”



Sen. Slaughter commented on President Shipman's comment that she wasn't sure if there were other entities at Columbia feeding the government demands that were then recycled to the Columbia community. Sen. Slaughter commented that it appears that many of the demands being placed on Columbia are coming from within Columbia itself and that Stand Columbia is one of those groups, adding that the group is anonymous. Sen. Slaughter quoted from Stand Columbia Issue #41, which came out after President Shipman announced the review of the University Senate. He read the following quotation: "We are now on our fourth President in less than 24 months. The need for fundamental reform of the Senate is undeniable." Sen. Slaughter commented that the logic of this argument does not make any sense. He stated that the logical conclusion of having four Presidents in under two years is that the Trustees need to be reformed, not the Senate, so that they make better decisions when selecting a President. He added that the logical conclusion is that the senior leadership has failed Columbia, and the attack on the Senate is a distraction from the Trustees' failures. Sen. Slaughter stated that the Senate was the only part of shared governance that the Trustees do not already control and the only part of shared governance that stayed true to the Statutes, academic freedom, and democracy over the last year. Sen. Slaughter then questioned why Stand Columbia would target the Senate and suggested that the reason might be because Stand Columbia is acting as a propaganda organ for the Trustees. He stated that Stand Columbia is targeting individuals and entities that the Trustees want on campus and that Stand Columbia was operating as a mask for the Trustees. He stated that Stand Columbia gives the federal government things to attack Columbia with and deflects from their own need to and failure to listen, learn, and lead.

Senator Greg Freyer (TTOT, SPH) summarized a statement from a colleague that stated their support for the Senate as the democratically elected body of the University and that they support a transparent review of the leadership of the University including the Trustees. Sen. Freyer added that this appeared to be the universal sentiment of his colleagues uptown.

### **Commission on Health Sciences Proposal**

Sen. D'Armiento introduced the [Commission on the Status of Health Sciences](#) that is a new Subcommittee of the Executive Committee of the University Senate. She stated that there needed to be a strategy to secure funding for health sciences research in order to evaluate the losses in funding and meet with the administration to develop strategies to continue research. Sen. D'Armiento added that anyone who was interested in serving on this commission should reach out to the Senate staff.

A question asked about what types of research the commission will support. Sen. D'Armiento clarified that it was not just medical research but all health sciences research. It was suggested that the scope of the Commission be beyond just the health sciences. Sen. D'Armiento responded that she understood that the problem extended beyond the health sciences when the proposal was written.

### **Resolution to Approve an Academic Program Leading to the Master of Science in Oral Sciences (College of Dental Medicine)**

Sen. D'Armiento introduced Senator James Applegate (Ten., A&S/NS), Co-Chair of the Education Committee, to lead the discussion on the [Resolution to Approve an Academic Program Leading to the Master of Science in Oral Sciences](#) within the College of Dental Medicine, as well as Michael Waring, Curriculum Manager at the College of Dental Medicine.

Sen. Applegate stated that the degree is a one-year master's program. He stated that the goal is to get students up to speed with the basic science of dentistry and that the program is a 30-point program. Sen. Applegate stated that the students who would attend this program would likely be students who want to go dental school or do a PhD but need a master's program for their application. He added that many students would be international students with previous dental science training but would need training in America in order to attend dental school in the United States. Sen. Applegate stated that the program was small and would likely take about 15 students a year and uses existing courses within the College of Dental Medicine that have sufficient space for additional students. He stated that the Education Committee voted to approve the program.

A question was asked about how the Education Committee carries out work to review a new program like this. Sen. Applegate responded that the Education Committee works very hard with the Provost's Office and stated that the process that a degree program is first started is lengthy. He stated that the school starts a proposal, which is approved by the school, which then goes to the Provost's Office, finally coming to the Education Committee. Sen. Applegate stated that, on the Education Committee, it is then looked at from the perspective of a student and faculty, looking at things like cost, value, and benefit to the individual after graduation. He added that the Education Committee has a strong working relationship with the Provost's Office.

Senator Andrew Einstein (Ten., P&S) stated his support for the program and that he was happy to see Senator Letty Moss-Salentijn (Ten., CDM) in the leadership for this program. Sen. Einstein asked what space demands would the program have on the Medical Center campus and whether this program would be a net-negative cost to the program. He also asked about if there were plans for an online component to the program. Sen. Applegate said that the Education Committee had asked if there was enough space at the College of Dental Medicine for the new students, which was deemed to be the case. He also stated that he presumed the program would result in more funds for the College of Dental Medicine. Sen. Applegate said that he was not sure about an online component and passed the question to Michael Waring. Waring stated that there are no plans to do the program online and that there is enough space to add new students.

There was a motion which was seconded to propose the resolution. The resolution passed by unanimous acclaim.

### **Resolution to Endorse the Statement of Concern (Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure)**

Sen. D'Armiento introduced member of the Faculty Affairs Committee, Sen. Howley, to present on the [Resolution to Endorse the Statement of Concern](#). Sen. Howley read the [statement by Faculty Affairs](#).

[Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee](#) regarding the University leadership's apparent acquiescence to federal government demands. The statement addressed concerns about changes to academic freedom and shared governance, requesting consultation or veto over changes that the Trustees propose on academic freedom and shared governance. The statement also addressed concerns about the appointment of a former Co-Chair of the Board of Trustees as an Acting President of the University, collapsing the shared governance structure of the University. The statement asked the Board of Trustees and Acting President to five main requests regarding academic freedom and shared governance.

Sen. Gordon asked, if the proposal was passed, would the Senate or Executive Committee have veto authority over any agreement the administration and Trustees enter with the federal government. Sen. Howley responded that there is no language to that effect in the proposal, only that the Senate urges the Trustees and administration to not enter such as an agreement. Sen. D'Armiento responded that the Senate is asking for a conversation, not veto power. Sen. Gordon restated his question. Sen. Howley responded that the statement is a current expression of what the Faculty Affairs Committee feels about the matter and that he would hope that the administration would consult with the faculty before entering such an agreement.

Senator Daniel Savin (Research Officers, Professional), Co-Chair of the Structure and Operations Committee, stated that the Senate has no fiduciary authority, despite what Stand Columbia has written. He stated that the Senate advises but ultimately does not tell the University how to budget and that there was misinformation about this going around.

A question was asked clarifying the section of the statement that Sen. Gordon was referencing in his question. Sen. Howley reread a portion of the statement and emphasized that, while the statement encourages the Board of Trustees to not have complete authority over entering an agreement, the Board of Trustees would have the power to override any vote or position the Senate might take on the matter.

There was a motion which was seconded to propose the resolution. The resolution passed 47-3-0 (in favor-opposed-abstention).

**Resolution to Endorse the Statement on Mahmoud Khalil and Mohsen Mahdawi (Student Affairs, Faculty Affairs, Commission on Diversity, Commission on the Status of Women)**

Sen. D'Armiento introduced the [Resolution to Endorse the Statement on Mahmoud Khalil and Mohsen Mahdawi](#), proposed by the Student Affairs Committee, the Faculty Affairs Committee, the Commission on Diversity, and the Commission on the Status of Women. Sen. D'Armiento introduced Senator Maria Martinez (Stu., CC), Co-Chair of the Student Affairs Committee and the Commission on Diversity, to present on the statement.

Sen. Martinez stated that, before reading the statement, there were significant developments that she needed to read since the statement had been drafted. She stated that both Mahmoud Khalil and Mohsen

Mahdawi were Palestinian students at Columbia, that Mohsen Mahdawi had been released from detention on April 30<sup>th</sup>, and that President Shipman had named both students for the first time in her recent email. Sen. Martinez then read the [statement](#) addressing the March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025 detention of recent SIPA alumnus Mahmoud Khalil and the April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025 detention of General Studies student Mohsen Mahdawi, both of whom are U.S. Green Card holders. The statement addresses the denial of due process for both students and the concerns this raises at the university.

There was a motion which was seconded to propose the resolution. The resolution passed 46-3-1 (in favor-opposed-abstained).

### **Annual Report of the Student Affairs Committee**

Sen. D'Armiento introduced Senator Jaxon Williams-Bellamy (Stu., LAW) to present on the [Annual Report of the Student Affairs Committee](#).

Sen. Williams-Bellamy highlighted the work that the Student Affairs Committee has done this year, including: advocating for the student body across all campuses, the rededication of Lerner Hall as a student space, continuing the work on the FLI Space for students, advocating for due processes in disciplinary trials at Columbia, advocating on behalf of shared governance at Columbia, and expanding engagement with the student body by increasing engagement with elected student leaders, the use of a regular student newsletter with updates, and hosting town halls. Sen. Williams-Bellamy stated that the Student Affairs Committee hopes to continue increasing engagement with the student body and student leadership, continuing work on student space and the FLI Space, looking at spaces for collaboration between undergraduate and graduate students. He thanked all the student Senators from this year for all the work they have done on the Student Affairs Committee.

Sen. D'Armiento thanked the graduating student Senators and stated that the student Senators can serve as models for the rest of the faculty and administration. Sen. D'Armiento additionally thanked the Co-Chairs and Vice Chair of the Student Affairs Committee, Sens. Martinez, Williams-Bellamy, and Bruce Goumain (Stu., GS) for everything they have done over the past two years with all the challenges that the University has faced over the past two years.

Sen. Freyer thanked the Student Affairs Committee for being a powerful force on the Senate.

Sen. Savin agreed and stated that he has been on the Senate for over 20 years and that the most effective and powerful block on the Senate has been the students.

Sen. Williams-Bellamy thanked this particular group of student Senators for the degree of awareness and engagement with the student body regarding the Senate. He stated that many students turn to the Senate now to be a collective voice for the student body, which was a goal that the Student Affairs Committee hoped to achieve this year.

Sen. Goehr thanked the student Senators and stated that the town hall that was organized by the students last week, contrary to comments made by President Shipman, was one of the most incredible moments of the year. Sen. Goehr stated that the town hall was seen to be threatening to the powers at the university. Sen. D'Armiento added that, when the students tried to take control of the town hall meeting, they were quieted and that the students need to be able to lead and be respected in the future.

### **Update from the Rules of University Conduct Committee**

Sen. D'Armiento introduced Sen. Williams-Bellamy to present on the [Update from the Rules of University Conduct Committee](#).

Sen. Williams-Bellamy stated that the update was in response to the announcements from Interim University President Armstrong and Acting University President Shipman about the changes to the University Judicial Board (UJB) process. Sen. Williams-Bellamy thanked the Rules Committee for all the work it has done. He then read the update, which outlined the past functioning of the UJB and the [announced changes to UJB](#) that the University administration announced after the [federal government requesting changes to the disciplinary processes](#). The statement noted concern about the Trustees decision to change the UJB without vote from the Senate as per the Statutes dictate.

Sen. Slaughter asked that the report from the Rules Committee be published as soon as possible, given the importance of the matter. Sen. D'Armiento agreed and responded that *The Columbia Spectator* might be able to publish sooner.

Sen. Howley thanked for Sen. Williams-Bellamy and the Rules Committee. Sen. Howley noted the comments that President Shipman made about the Rules of University Conduct in relation to Title VI violations. He added that former President Shafik, Co-Chairs of the Board of Trustees Claire Shipman and David Greenwald, and Co-Chair of the Task Force on Antisemitism David Schizer went in front of a Congressional committee and voluntarily declared that Columbia was likely in violation in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Sen. Howley noted that Acting President Shipman stated, in the absence of any finding or investigation, that Columbia had “a specific problem with rampant antisemitism,” which Sen. Howley noted was a quotation that still appeared in news coverage and political statements today. He added that, in his experience as faculty, he is aware that the primary obligation of university leadership is to reduce exposure to legal liability. Sen. Howley stated that the voluntary offering of this statement by university leadership was a blatant violation of the fiduciary responsibilities of the Trustees and that the only logical explanation he could image was that there was an intentional effort to use Title VI enforcement mechanisms at the Office of Civil Rights to bring about changes to the university that leadership did not want to pursue through democratic processes of the Senate. Sen. Howley said that he has tried to work under the assumption of no bad intentions from university leadership over the last 18 months but that it is difficult to continue thinking that way.

Senator Jalaj Mehta (Stu. (Undergraduate), SEAS) stated that he had attended a listening session and had hoped to ask President Shipman if she believes that Board of Trustees are bound by the University Statutes, underlying the importance of that question given the recent publication of the Trustee By-Laws that reference the University Statutes.

Sen. D'Armiento stated that, upon looking up discipline processes at peer institutions, 14 out of the 16 universities looked at, students were involved in the disciplinary processes and that the two remaining universities had unclear student involvement in disciplinary processes. Sen. D'Armiento outlined a few different models that other universities have and outlined the importance of having students involved in the disciplinary process as is precedent.

Sen. Slaughter commented that the UJB used to be under the Provost's Office and was moved to University Life so that there was a separation of powers. He added that the justification was that students were being punished under Provost powers that they did not have under the Rules and that the separation of powers was done to have checks and balances in order to protect the rights and due process for students.

Sen. D'Armiento adjourned the meeting and wished everyone a good summer. She wished the students luck on their finals and congratulated all graduating seniors.

Respectfully submitted,

Senate staff

University Senate

Proposed: June 13, 2025

Adopted:

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE 2025-2026 ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

WHEREAS Columbia University is committed to ensuring that all students can participate fully in the educational opportunities provided by Columbia University;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the University Senate affirm its support for the University's commitment to make any needed adjustments in the calendar to assure that the goals of a regular academic year can be met over the course of three semesters, including a summer term, with a Commencement date to be fixed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any significant future calendar revisions include substantive consultation with the University Senate, whose responsibility for the academic calendar is identified in the University Statutes (Chapter 2, Section 24, paragraph i), and has been delegated to the Education Committee.

Proponents:

Education Committee

Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee

Student Affairs Committee

# 2025/2026 Academic Calendar

June 5, 2025



# 2025-2026 Academic Calendar

- **Goal:** With modest changes to the 2025-2026 academic calendar, and in compliance with financial aid, NYSED, MSCHE and SEVP requirements, create the option for Master's programs with large cohorts of international students to allow incoming International Master's students whose visas are delayed to:
  - Enter their program in January 2026\*
  - Take a meaningful number of courses in Spring and Summer A\*, and
  - Be able to engage in a meaningful summer internship experience
- **Features:**
  - The **Fall semester master calendar will remain unchanged**, except with an added option for Fall B courses (from late October to December)
  - The Spring semester will follow adjustments made during COVID: **Start the week before MLK Jr. Day in January**, and shorten the semester by one week, hence **ending the spring semester in late April**
    - 4 months of summer for faculty and students
  - Offering **Summer A courses between late April and mid June:**
    - Students can engage in internships between mid June and late August
    - Instructors will finish teaching Summer A courses in mid June instead of after July 4
  - *Curricular Practical Training (CPT) eligibility: Students arriving in time for Fall B could complete credits in Fall B, Spring, and Summer A, and meet the requirement of two consecutive semesters of enrollment to be eligible for CPT. Introducing elective specializations with internship requirements would grant CPT eligibility for students who arrive in the Spring and take courses in Spring and Summer A*
- **Decisions:**
  - Spring Semester: Start the Spring Semester the week before MLK Jr. Day
  - Commencement: Proceed as currently scheduled or could be moved to the first week in May following the end of the spring semester

(\*) or enter the program in Fall B and take courses in Fall B, Spring and Summer A

# 2025-2026 Academic Calendar

- **Where We Are:**

- Incoming international Master's students are very concerned about visa delays, their ability to take a meaningful course load during the upcoming academic year and perform an internship in summer 2026
- The Registrar jointly with the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Programs (for NYSED and MSCHE compliance), Student Financial Services (for Title IV/Financial aid compliance), and ISSO (for SEVP compliance) have reviewed and confirmed compliance of the proposed academic calendar
- The Deans and the Provost strongly support using this proposed academic calendar in case the visa delays are significant

- **The Ask:** We kindly request that the Senate approve the following proposed academic calendar: Master calendar (jointly with the customary secondary calendar (with half semesters) used by Columbia Business School) with both Commencement options (i.e. keep Commencement the week of May 18 or move to week of May 4) by the next Senate Plenary on June 13, 2025
- **Next Steps:** Following approval by the Senate and Acting President Shipman, we would likely wait until the end of June to further assess the impact of visa delays. If the delays are significant, the Deans will approve the switch to the proposed Academic Calendar, the new calendar will be communicated to incoming and continuing students, and the Deans will work with their faculty and staff on academic planning

(\*) or enter the program in Fall B and take courses in Fall B, Spring and Summer A

# Proposed CU Master Calendar 2025-2026

## FALL SEMESTER

### SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	LABOR DAY	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

## SPRING SEMESTER

### JANUARY

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	MLK DAY	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

## SUMMER A & B

### MAY

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	COMMENCEMENT					23
24	MEMOR DAY	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## Key

Instructional Days

Reading and Exam Days

## OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## FEBRUARY

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

## JUNE

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	JUNE TEENTH	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

## NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	ACAD HOLIDAY	ELEC DAY	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	ACAD HOLIDAY	THANKS GIVING	ACAD HOLIDAY	29
30						

## MARCH

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	SPRING BREAK					21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## JULY

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	INDEP DAY (OBS)	INDEP DAY
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	SEMESTER ENDS	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## APRIL

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	SEMESTER ENDS	28	29	30		

## AUGUST

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	SEMESTER ENDS	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					



# Proposed Secondary Calendar

FALL SEMESTER						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

SPRING SEMESTER						
JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

SUMMER A & B						
MAY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Key
Instructional Days
Reading and Exam Days

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

MARCH						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

JULY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

APRIL						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

# Scenario 2: Commencement Earlier in May

FALL SEMESTER						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

SPRING SEMESTER						
JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	MLK JR DAY	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

SUMMER A & B						
MAY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3						9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	MEMOR DAY	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Key

Instructional Days
Reading and Exam Days

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	JUNE TEENTH	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Commencement could be held as currently scheduled (week of May 18); or could be moved to the first week in May, to follow closer to the end of the spring semester.

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	ACAD HOLIDAY	ELECT DAY	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	ACAD HOLIDAY	THANKS GIVING	ACAD HOLIDAY	29
30						

MARCH						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15						21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

JULY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	INDEP DAY (OBS)	INDEP DAY
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	SEMESTER ENDS	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

APRIL						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	SEMESTER ENDS	28	29	30		

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	SEMESTER ENDS	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

## **Student Affairs Committee Statement on Protest-related Disciplinary Proceedings**

June 13, 2025

After a period of interim disciplinary measures in connection with a demonstration, Columbia's Rules Administrator issued notices to individuals informing them of hearing dates. It has been brought to our attention that these notices contained a list of recommended disciplinary measures ranging from one-year suspensions to expulsions, and included students who chose to voluntarily leave the demonstration at the request of administrators.

It is unclear whether the University's actions and recommended disciplinary measures are consistent with University Statutes or represent appropriate interpretations of the Rules of University Conduct. We are committed to investigating these claims and ensuring that proper due process was afforded to the student body. Especially concerning is the possibility that sanctions were placed on students who voluntarily left the demonstration. A potential violation of this type threatens to erode the principles of trust on which our campus is built. To protect the freedom of expression on campus we need to avoid setting the precedent whereby student protest action might result directly in lengthy suspension or expulsion.

We are also concerned with the removal of student representation from the University Judicial Board. As students we uphold the procedural value of adjudicating cases of alleged conduct violations emergent from protest activity through judgement by a jury of one's peers, the practice of a majority of peer institutions. The current composition of the University Judicial Board does not respect this value, and the restriction of student voices in university decision-making should be understood in line with an increasingly centralized approach to governance.

These proposed disciplinary actions represent striking departures from prior cases and unprecedented interpretations of the Rules of University Conduct at Columbia. We thus recommend on record that students considering protest action on campus be wary of the unpredictability coming from the administration on disciplinary cases, and thus take into consideration these increased risks. The current approach to student discipline has changed significantly, and with these changes Columbia has forfeited its reputation as an institution which defends the student right to protest.

We conclude by wholeheartedly urging the administration to revisit its approach to disciplinary action in line with the Rules of University Conduct and the principles of the freedom of expression.

Student Affairs Committee

## **University Senate Plenary | October 27, 2023**

### **Resolution to Address Institutional Failings Relating to the Case of R. Hadden**

Introduction: Sen. Jennifer Manly

First, a brief background to this resolution, which addresses institutional failings relating to the case of Robert Hadden. Hadden practiced medicine in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at CUIMC from 1987 to 2012. He lost his license in 2016, after pleading guilty to two State charges of criminal sex acts. Between 2018 and 2021, Columbia settled with more than two hundred of his patients for \$236.5 million. As more women went public, federal investigators took up the case in 2020 and he was convicted and jailed in July 2023. Earlier this month, another 301 patients sued the Medical School, alleging the doctor sexually abused them during physical examinations, which more than doubles the number of victims who have come forward. The media reports tell us that according to the lawsuit, hospital employees, university colleagues, and managers in the department knew as early as 1994 that Hadden was assaulting patients, when at that time, a report was forwarded to the acting chairman of the department of OBGYN. The lawsuit also claims that doctors, nurses, and other caregivers were frequently present in the examination room while the assaults occurred and did nothing to stop the harassment.

Learning of the details of the situation through extensive media coverage, several committees came forward to express grave concerns:

- concerns over the case itself
- concerns that senators (and of course the entire Columbia Community) were learning of the case for the first time through the media
- and concerns that the case indicated a huge failing of oversight and accountability and that, without a full understanding of how this happened, the Community could not be reassured that it could not happen again in the future.

The Committee on External Relations and Research Policy took the lead in discussing and drafting the resolution, with the support of five other committees:

- Commission on the Status of Women
- Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee
- Research Officers Committee
- Student Affairs Committee
- Commission on Diversity

**RESOLUTION TO ADDRESS INSTITUTIONAL FAILINGS  
RELATING TO THE CASE OF R. HADDEN**

BE IT RESOLVED that the University Senate adopt this statement on the Hadden case.

The actions of Robert Hadden are heinous and reprehensible and the more we learn, the more troubled we become. Recent revelations have profoundly shocked us all. As members of the University Senate, we are morally bound to make this statement.

We are distressed by the actions of CUIMC and its leadership in response to these events. The abject failure of CUIMC to respond in an appropriate and timely manner is beyond troubling. What we are now learning of these events —to the extent that press reports are accurate— has shaken our community to the core and has done real damage to Columbia’s reputation and to our trust and faith in our own institution.

We demand that the University:

1. Assume responsibility for these terrible events and take action to hold to account those in positions of authority when the Hadden events took place.
2. Hire an external law firm to independently review these events and: (i) report in detail how this failure of oversight and accountability happened; and (ii) recommend systems and protections to prevent any like recurrence. A written report should be provided by the external law firm to President Shafik and the full Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will share a report summary and its recommendations with the University Senate, to be presented in the plenary and made public. We must understand how the University’s policies and systems failed so completely over an extended period of time, and never let it happen again.
3. It is essential that the University establish and maintain oversight of the faculty and the staff at CUIMC and, upon completion of the above investigation, we want to make certain that the proper processes and mechanisms exist to ensure this oversight. If the report reveals that other current University personnel had any responsibility for the failure of oversight in the Hadden events, the University must hold them to account.

Proponents: External Relations and Research Policy Committee  
Commission on the Status of Women  
Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee  
Research Officers Committee  
Student Affairs Committee  
Commission on Diversity



## **University Senate Plenary | October 27, 2023**

### **Resolution to Address Institutional Failings Relating to the Case of R. Hadden**

Remarks: Sen. Susan Witte

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Senate on the importance of this matter.

I'm speaking on behalf of the Commission on the Status of Women, whose mission is to inquire into the status, equity, and opportunities available to women who are officers of instruction, research, libraries, administration, students, and supporting staff. I also believe that I speak for thousands of us affiliated with Columbia, some for decades, others only weeks, all who wish to see our institution held accountable for the abuses that occurred by Hadden while employed here.

On the macro level, we are in the midst of a national maternal mortality crisis, and accountability for high-quality OB/GYN care is at the nexus of reproductive justice and the health of women and people who give birth. We are also amidst a Me Too movement spotlighting the prevalence of sexual misconduct, especially in the workplace, holding perpetrators accountable, listening to survivors, and updating policies to hopefully, and finally, coalesce around what for centuries was silence on sexual harassment and abuse of women.

This resolution addresses a matter of tremendous significance and moral weight in public health nationwide, historically, and at our institution. For many of us, it is deeply, deeply personal.

My research intersects with issues of violence against women, so I think about this issue often. But more so, I have been a patient with the Columbia OB/GYN department for 35 years. While I was not a patient of Hadden's, given the statistics, I cannot help but wonder how many of us, even on this call, know survivors or may be one. I understand that some of you have been engaged in organizing in support of what this resolution calls for - accountability by the University - for months, some going so far as to propose processes to follow and offering their personal and professional expertise and support.

Why is immediate action essential? Under the Adult Survivors Act in New York, any patients who have not yet come forward against Hadden or would like to hold others accountable in this case need to do so by November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Today is October 27<sup>th</sup>.

Justice and accountability require the University to IMMEDIATELY notify all former Hadden patients about Hadden's abuses and hold accountable all individuals who may have allowed this.

As new leaders, President Shafik and Dr. Armstrong sincerely apologized to his victims and their loved ones, pledging to do everything possible to ensure the safety and welfare of all community members, including patients.

However, we know that structural and institutional oppressions carry on through generations if not addressed with both the intention and the impact of rooting out processes and individuals that ALLOW for lack of accountability and instead emphasize protecting the institution at all costs.

This resolution suggests that apologies and promises for better future practices are not enough. We demand that the University hold to account those in positions of authority when the Hadden events took place and immediately contact Hadden's patients to allow them full diligence of the law under Adult Survivor's Act in New York.

To be clear, this did not happen under the watch of either Dr. Armstrong or President Shafik, and they are prepared to look forward. But there must be a process whereby the institution takes accountability for its role in the sexual assaults of what are now known to be thousands, not hundreds, of patients. This is the only way for the institution to ensure credibility and trust moving forward.

Immediate action begins to repair the harm created by Hadden and the University. This would be a first and significant step for the University to take, showing that we ARE taking a different approach to this matter than that brought in the past, one that charts a course for REPAIR of HARM and one that GENUINELY honors our shared values.

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## University Response to Robert Hadden

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**Minouche Shafik** <officeofthepresident@columbia.edu>  
Reply-To: officeofthepresident@adcu.columbia.edu  
To: PRESIDENT-EMPLOYEES@lists.columbia.edu

Mon, Nov 13, 2023 at 2:03 PM

Dear colleagues,

As you likely already know, today we announced a series of actions to address the abuse, harm, and trauma inflicted by former gynecologist Robert Hadden, which you can read more about [here](#).

I wanted to share Dr. Armstrong's message to the faculty and staff at CUIMC and strongly encourage anyone with relevant information about Hadden's abuse to reach out to the external investigator. We are eager to hear any insights into how to strengthen our culture and processes to ensure this never happens again.

Nothing can excuse that Hadden's patients were mistreated in a setting where they should have been cared for and safe. I commend the courageous women who have come forward on behalf of all of Hadden's survivors, and offer my deepest apologies to them and their loved ones.

Sincerely,  
Minouche Shafik  
President, Columbia University in the City of New York

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Dear Colleagues,

Over the last weeks, I have heard from many members of our community who are disappointed and angered by the past institutional failures that permitted Robert Hadden's appalling abuse of patients to go unrecognized for so many years. There is also a strongly held view that we must do more to support the courageous survivors of his abuse and exploitation, a view that we share. The University failed these survivors, and for that we are deeply sorry. Today, President Shafik and I are sharing with you a series of important actions Columbia will take to repair the harm that has been done and to ensure we are fulfilling the high ideals of the University and the medical profession.

**Today we announced** that notice will be provided to former patients who may be unaware of Hadden's criminal conviction and incarceration. No survivor of his abuse should mistakenly believe they are alone in their struggle. We have created a new survivors' settlement fund and retained an experienced, trauma-informed administrator, [Simone Belchuk](#), to oversee that fund.

We also announced that [Joan Loughnane](#), a partner at Sidley Austin LLP who previously served in a variety of leadership positions in the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, will lead an external investigation. We have asked Ms. Loughnane to determine what allowed Hadden's misconduct to continue for so long—and to make recommendations to ensure we have the policies and procedures in place to prevent this from ever happening again. Survivors and our Columbia community deserve a full and transparent accounting of these events, and the report will be made public. Ms. Loughnane has set up a voicemail box at 212-839-6000 and an email at [haddeninfo@sidley.com](mailto:haddeninfo@sidley.com) where you can provide your contact information, and she or members of her team will reach out to you promptly. She will protect the identity of patients who experienced abuse to the maximum extent permitted by law.

As we redouble our commitment to patient safety and quality of care, our faculty practice is undertaking a series of new initiatives, overseen by Jim McKiernan, CEO of ColumbiaDoctors, and the ColumbiaDoctors board. In the near term, we are expanding channels for patients and staff to report physician misconduct and investing in chaperone training and other safety systems in partnership with NYP. We will soon be sharing more information about several additional key steps including:

- working with outside experts to provide transparent assessments of our patient quality and safety programs and procedures;
- investing in predictive analytics for identifying high-risk behavior by faculty and staff, so that timely intervention can prevent harm from occurring; and
- creating a new Center for Patient Safety Science to conduct the research that will define the future of quality and patient safety at Columbia and across the country.

We are heartbroken by this tragic situation. Earning our patients' trust is paramount to all we do. We are profoundly sorry for the pain that Hadden's patients suffered and regret the impact our handling of this matter has had on survivors and on our entire community. The fact that the steps outlined in today's announcement were not taken before need not deter or distract us. Our responsibility is to do the right thing today and in the future. Resources and support for survivors and a fuller description of Columbia's actions can be found at [cuimc.columbia.edu/rebuildingtrust](https://cuimc.columbia.edu/rebuildingtrust). More information will be shared about our progress very soon.

Sincerely,

**Katrina Armstrong, MD**

Dean of the Faculties of Health Sciences and the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons  
Executive Vice President for Health and Biomedical Sciences, Columbia University