

University Senate Plenary

February 27, 2026



University Senate

Proposed: February 27, 2026

Adopted: February 27, 2026

University Senate

Friday, February 27, 2026 at 1:00 p.m., [Miller Theatre](#)

[Registration required](#)

After registering you will receive a confirmation email with meeting details.

PROPOSED AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Adoption of the minutes of February 6, 2026
3. President's report and questions
4. Chair's report and questions
5. Old business:
 - a. Discussion of Professor of Instruction proposal (Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure)
6. New business:
 - a. Committee statements and updates:
 - i. Hadden Epstein Statement (Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Diversity, External Relations and Research Policy, Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure, Research Officers, and Student Affairs)
 - ii. Statement on Hadden Report Delays (Student Affairs Committee)
 - iii. Declaration by the Committee on the Rules of University Conduct (Rules of University Conduct)
7. Adjourn

University Senate | Parliamentary Procedure Quick Guide: February 27, 2026

1. **Quorum:** Half of all sitting Senators (typically 90 to 111 senators)

2. Voting

2.1. Only Senators present may vote

2.2. **Default:** A motion passes if more Senators vote for than against it. (This always applies to amendments to motions even if the main motion requires a super-majority.)

2.3. Exceptions

2.3.1. **Parliamentary exceptions:** 2/3 vote required for certain motions. The motion passes only if twice as many Senators vote for as vote against it. This includes:

- Previous question (close debate and vote)
- Suspend the rules (allow something normally not allowed)
- Change the order of business
- Limit or extend debate

2.3.2. **University Senate exceptions:** The following actions require at least 3/5 of all Senators to vote in favor.

- Amendments to University Senate By-Laws
- Proposed amendments to University Statutes (including new degree types, for example)

3. Debate

3.1. Only Senators can speak, with some limited exceptions (officers of schools or committee members presenting reports)

3.2. **Germane:** Speak only about the merits of the motion on the floor

3.3. **Courteous:** Never speak ill of another Senator

3.4. **Brief:** No more than 10 minutes without permission of the Senate (2/3 vote)

3.5. **Engaged:** No reading from lengthy documents without permission (2/3 vote)

3.6. **Don't hog the floor:** Don't speak more than twice on same motion without permission (2/3 vote)

4. Amendment Rules

4.1. Must be germane to the main motion

4.2. Cannot just reverse the main motion

4.3. Can be amended only once (no amendments to amendments of amendments)

4.4. Must be voted on before the main motion. (To postpone a vote on an amendment, you must postpone the vote on the main motion)

5. **Some privileged and incidental motions:** Almost always in order.

5.1. Point of order: To point out that the rules are not being followed. Chair rules on it immediately. Chair's decision may be appealed. Appeal is decided by majority vote—ties go to the chair.

5.2. Point of privilege (personal or general): To point out an urgent condition preventing one or more Senators from fully participating. Chair rules on it immediately and acts.

5.3. Call for the order of the day: If the Senate is not following its agenda. Chair rules immediately.

5.4. Adjourn. To close the meeting.

Minutes of the Meeting of February 6, 2026

94 out of 107 Senators were present.

Senator Jeanine D’Armiento (Ten., P&S), Executive Committee Chair, called the University Senate to order at 1:20pm. Sen. D’Armiento welcomed Senators and guests to the fifth Plenary of the 2025-2026 session. Sen. D’Armiento reminded attendees of the Parliamentary procedures and that recordings are not permitted in Plenary meetings.

Senator Joseph Slaughter (Ten., A&S/HUM) noted that the [Rules of University Conduct Committee](#) (Rules Committee) would like to delay their proposed report as listed on the proposed agenda.

There was a motion which was seconded to remove the Rules Committee update from the agenda. The motion passed 58-0-0 (in favor-opposed-abstention).

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

Senators then adopted the [minutes](#) of the December 12th, 2025 Plenary.

Updates from President Shipman

President Claire Shipman began her remarks by addressing the recent media coverage around the release of over three million files related to Jeffrey Epstein and the [relationship of Epstein and his associates to Columbia University](#). President Shipman stated that the University is working on going through the released materials and that she understood how unsettling this information was for the community. She stated that there was enormous pressure to move quickly and provide answers but that she believed the best practice in this scenario would be to proceed deliberately, deeply, and with great care. President Shipman stated that she was happy to [have welcomed](#) the [President-Designate Jennifer Mnookin](#), noting that she was a spectacular leader of a University and was a renowned legal scholar. President Shipman stated that she had gotten to know President-Designate Mnookin over the past few months in context of her leadership as Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and then through the Columbia Presidential Search Committee. President Shipman stated that President-Designate Mnookin will remain Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison until their 2026 commencement ceremony in early May and then begin her term as Columbia University President on July 1st, 2026. President Shipman stated that she has begun her work to transition President-Designate Mnookin to the University, noting that President-Designate Mnookin’s intention is to come to campus a few times before beginning her term as

President. President Shipman stated that she was open to any ideas or suggestions on how to best transition President-Designate Mnookin into Columbia. President Shipman stated that the [Association of American Universities \(AAU\)](#) added an additional session that addressed rebuilding trust of American institutions of higher education nationwide, specifically for large research institutions. She stated that they discussed transparency in the cost of higher education, models for future research, and questions around ideological university within institutions. President Shipman stated that the collective wisdom at these meetings was invaluable, noting that this was a moment for collaboration across institutions in a way not seen previously. President Shipman stated that Provost Angela Olinto was forming a faculty group to look at the future of higher education and what that will look like for Columbia. President Shipman added that this group was one of two groups that the administration was trying to put together with the consultation of the University Senate. President Shipman stated that the University recently had another visit from the [Middle States Commission on Higher Education Accreditation](#). She noted that the University had been undergoing a [periodic review and self-study for reaccreditation starting in 2023](#) but that, after the original completion of the self-study and visit from the external peer review team, Columbia was issued a [Non-Compliance Warning](#) in relation to the standard of Ethics and Integrity. President Shipman stated that this gave the University time to review leadership and issues on campus related to the standard under review. She stated that the recent visit from the commission determined that Columbia was no longer in risk of non-compliance, noting that the final vote would happen in early spring 2026. She said that this process was a lot of work but that the process would help strengthen the trust and integrity in higher education.

President Shipman stated that she was engaged in improving the student experience, noting that student space in particular was a challenge and that more needed to be done to address lack of dining and student spaces. She said that there was a list of short-term things she expected the administration to get to in the spring 2026 semester and that the fitness situation on campus was an immediate priority. President Shipman stated that there were committees being formed to discuss these issues, ranging from operational to academic issues. She said that it has been enormously helpful to hear from the community on these issues. President Shipman stated that she hoped to address these issues, especially in light of [proposals to expand the number of undergraduate students](#), noting that no final decision had been made about an expansion yet. President Shipman also welcomed the [new Dean of the Mailman School of Public Health, Dr. Jonathan Mermin](#), noting that he would begin his role in early March. She stated that he has spent decades advancing public research and policy, most recently serving as the Director of the National Center for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and Tuberculosis Prevention at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. President Shipman also thanked Kathleen Sikkema for her work as Interim Dean of the Mailman School of Public Health during the last few months when the University had been under intense pressure. President Shipman highlighted the recent [reception at the Columbia Institute for the Study of Human Rights](#) welcoming the 2025-2026 cohort of the Human Rights Advocates Program. She also noted the recent memorial service for Louis Brus, the Samuel Latham Mitchill Professor Emeritus in the Department of Chemistry, noting his status as a [Nobel laureate for his work on quantum dots](#). President Shipman noted Professor Brus's commitment to basic scientific education and dedication to his students.

Senator Ben Orlove (Ten., SIPA) noted that the [Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee](#) had already been meeting with administration regarding campus space issues, and that the [Education Committee](#) had also been involved in these conversations. Sen. Orlove asked President Shipman if she would commit to ensuring that at least one representative from these Senate committees would be present in the new committees the administration was forming to address campus space issues. President Shipman responded that she was working with the Senate to form a committee for the senior administration to consult with. Sen. D'Armiento responded that the Senate had been asking for a committee to form to discuss higher level issues at the University with senior administrators in order for the Senate to be informed about concerns going on at the University. Sen. D'Armiento stated that this committee is in the process of being formed and that she would soon speak about parallel committees being formed across the University in her Chair's remarks. President Shipman responded that she does want the group formed around campus space to be formed as quickly as possible and to have information given to the Senate.

Senator Liane Bdair (Stu., CC) acknowledged the recent [arrests of twelve students and faculty](#) at a protest demanding that Columbia declare itself a sanctuary campus, the [arrest of Mahmoud Khalil by ICE without a judicial warrant](#) in Spring 2025, and the [Columbia policy for ICE visits](#) allowing for access to University buildings or members without a warrant under exigent circumstances. Sen. Bdair asked President Shipman what commitment President Shipman and the administration would make to protect students, faculty, and staff from ICE. President Shipman responded that Columbia has been committed to offer maximum protection for students regarding ICE and access. She stated that Columbia still requires a judicial warrant and not just an administrative warrant in order to access campus, especially when the campus is closed. President Shipman stated that, in the case of Mahmoud Khalil, there was not a warrant for ICE to come into the building and detain him. She stated that there was reporting that [alleged](#) that the administration had allowed ICE to access the building to detain Khalil or made the process easier for ICE. President Shipman stated that this was not the case but that the University does not have complete control over what ICE agents and the federal government can do. She stated that continuing to require judicial warrants and the support that the [International Students & Scholars Office \(ISSO\)](#) has been providing demonstrate Columbia's support toward international students. President Shipman stated that the administration takes this issue very seriously and that she would like to offer as much reassurance as possible, given the limit of Columbia not being sovereign to the federal government. She stated that she had heard these concerns recently from human rights advocates from foreign countries trying to make a decision about whether to come into the country or not.

Senator Eli Baum (Stu., CC) asked about the [unreleased report on Robert Hadden's sexual abuse](#) at CUIMC, adding that he noticed that Columbia Trustee Abigail Elbaum was on the [Advisory Committee for the Sloane Hospital for Women](#) where Robert Hadden worked. Sen. Baum asked President Shipman if there are any guardrails to ensure that the Hadden report will be released in an unaltered way even if it implicates Trustees and, if the report implicates members of the Board of Trustees, would this be sufficient grounds to reform the Board of Trustees. President Shipman responded that the Hadden report is a completely independent investigation and that there is no ability for the administration or the Board of

Trustees to control any aspect of what is in the report, when it is released, or how to navigate the release politically. She stated that, while she was not the President at the time that the decision was made, she supported the independent investigation as the gold-standard of how to handle the situation. President Shipman stated that she imagined that the report would be released very soon but that the amount of time being taken reflected the thorough job that was being done. She stated that there was not much else for her to say about what to expect or how anyone will respond.

Senator Jeffrey Wayno (Libraries) asked about the cost-of-living issues, noting that this topic had been brought up many times before at plenaries. Sen. Wayno stated that, at the November 21st, 2025 Plenary, Senator Susan Bernofsky (Ten., ARTS) had raised this issue and that President Shipman had [responded](#) that she was working with each of the Deans to work through the cost-of-living issues and that the issue varied between faculty divisions. Sen. Wayno asked if there would be a commitment to working on the cost-of-living increases for administration officers and librarians. He also asked about the larger model by which the University considered cost-of-living adjustments, noting that it seems like the University gives out pots of money to individual units at the University, with those units being then responsible for dispersing the money to the individuals they oversee. Sen. Wayno noted that this approach seemed flawed, stating that everyone across the University should be getting cost-of-living adjustments or not be getting these adjustments and he asked if President Shipman would address these concerns. President Shipman responded that this was a critical issue and that some people had mentioned what they felt was a differential between schools, noting that Columbia was an exceptionally decentralized and siloed university. She stated that she did not have the time or expertise to explain the logic and history of the current system but that she wondered if this was part of what Sen. D'Armiento wanted to do with the new committee in order to understand some of this financial framework thinking. President Shipman stated that, while she did not believe it would make sense for her to try to explain the situation in a sentence or two, the concern has repeatedly been raised. She stated that there is a sense of frustration over the last few years regarding the economic strain that many have felt and asked if it would be okay to pull together members of her administration that would have more expertise in order to better answer the question. Sen. D'Armiento responded that the Senate had repeatedly been raising this concern, that the cost-of-living pool should not be a bank of money that the University can pull from when in financial distress. Sen. D'Armiento stated that the Senate has a commitment to having the meeting to discuss these issues with the administration and that she would inform the Senate when they have that meeting. President Shipman responded that, while the administration is looking at ways to support the student experience, the rest of the staff and faculty that support these students also need support for their morale and cost-of-living.

Sen. Bernofsky thanked President Shipman for bringing up the Epstein files and asked whether Columbia is prepared to commit to an independent review of the Columbia-affiliated individuals entangled with Epstein. Sen. Bernofsky noted that the Columbia Spectator had reported that Jay Lefkowitz, who [represented Columbia University in its deal with the Trump administration, held a close relationship with Jeffrey Epstein and served as his legal counsel](#) for his sex trafficking charges. Sen. Bernofsky asked whether there would be a reckoning with Columbia being associated with so many individuals that are in

the Epstein files, noting the relation that this issue had with the Robert Hadden case and the over [\\$1 billion that the University paid out](#) in that case. President Shipman responded that she had heard this request from many community members but, given the emerging information, this type of request would be premature at this time but that she fully understood the concerns.

Senator Michael Thaddeus (Ten., A&S/NS) asked about the Hadden situation again, following Sen. Baum's question. Sen. Thaddeus stated that the University had [commissioned the report back in 2023](#) and, while nobody wants any interference from the Trustees on the content of the report, that the timing of the report was a different matter. He noted that this report has taken a remarkably long time and asked President Shipman to confirm that there has not been any member of the administrative leadership or Board of Trustees that has intentionally delayed or tried to delay the release of the Hadden report. President Shipman responded that there was no request from anyone for a delay, noting that, if anything, the ask would be for the report to come out sooner given how long it has been.

Senator Robert Mulvey (Stu., GS) received emails from graduate students who were affected by their removal from 542 W 112th St. Columbia Residential apartment building so that the building can be turned over to the undergraduate Columbia Housing, noting the similarity of this event with the [request for General Studies students to abruptly vacate their Columbia Residential units](#) in summer 2025. Sen. Robert stated that he was disappointed to hear that this was happening again to clear more space for undergraduate housing and asked if there was any communication with the Senate [Housing Policy Committee](#) or the Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee regarding this decision. He also asked if there was consideration to allow some students to stay in their current units or to delay the transition for these graduate students out of this building. President Shipman responded that the administration has worked with each affected student to have top-tier selection to see where they want to go. She stated that the building was installing a new sprinkler system, which was considered a safety upgrade for the building, and that it was considered not possible to leave people in the building while this maintenance change was underway. President Shipman stated that she was not sure that the building was being cleared for undergraduates as Sen. Mulvey had stated. She stated that she believed the notification for 542 W 112th St. was quite early but that she would be willing to have a further conversation to address concerns.

Chair's Report and Questions

Sen. D'Armiento began her remarks by congratulating President-Designate Mnookin and welcomed her to Columbia. She thanked the Presidential Search Committee and stated that the Senate would be working with President-Designate Mnookin's transition team. Sen. D'Armiento stated that the [Executive Committee](#) would be meeting with President-Designate Mnookin over the coming months and that she recommended community members send any questions or concerns they would like the Executive Committee to bring up to President-Designate Mnookin. Sen. D'Armiento thanked President Shipman for leading the University through the interim period and her engagement with the University Senate. Sen. D'Armiento stated that although she was optimistic about this appointment she was concerned about the erosion of shared governance at Columbia given the increasing scope and pace of executive decision-

making, despite reassurances from the administration regarding their commitment to shared governance. Sen. D'Armiento acknowledged the [review of the University Senate announced by President Shipman on April 18th, 2025](#), stating that the Senate review committee shared its draft of its report with the Executive Committee in late November 2025, requesting that the Executive Committee identify any inaccuracies within the report and that the Executive Committee had done so within a week. Sen. D'Armiento stated that the Executive Committee has been informed that the review committee submitted its final report in December and that, as of a month later, the Senate Executive Committee has still not received the report. Sen. D'Armiento stated that the Executive Committee was looking forward to receiving the report and sharing the details through Senate committees and then through the plenary. She added that, as many Senators had already asked, the Senate was also awaiting the release of the Hadden report as well.

Sen. D'Armiento stated that this week noted the importance of reports, as documents relating to the Epstein case are deeply disturbing and demand the collective attention of the community. She stated that this moment reflected on the capture and corruption of institutions and the shared responsibility to protect individuals and institutions. Sen. D'Armiento stated that, too often, public disclosure focuses narrowly on the absence of proven illegality in ways that risk obscuring broader moral responsibility. She stated that the documents raise profound troubling concerns over relationships between Columbia affiliates and Jeffrey Epstein, a convicted sex offender. Sen. D'Armiento stated that, while much is unknown at the current moment, there is a clear moral obligation as a university to enact meaningful change when wrongdoing has occurred and that Columbia must hold itself to the highest standards. She stated that the community is acutely aware of the consequences of when institutions fail in this responsibility and that the Senate was committed to addressing these concerns with seriousness, integrity, and transparency, noting that the Senate will ask the difficult questions, seek clear answers, and consider concrete reforms. Sen. D'Armiento stated that there has been ever greater concentration of authority into the hands of the executive administration with fewer constraints on this authority and diminishing efforts from to engage with shared governance structures set out in the University Statutes. Sen. D'Armiento stated that the Senate recognized the challenges facing our institution but considering how best to respond would require the collective efforts of committed community members elected and drawn from the different pools across the University. She stated that narrow executive decision-making is ill-suited and inadequate for the task of addressing current issues. Sen. D'Armiento noted the matters that needed wide consultation: the size and structure of the student body, expansion of the undergraduate student body, decreasing the reliance on international students at the University, the importance of graduate students in teaching and research, the structure of the faculty, halving of the tenure-track share of the total faculty over the past two decades, concerns over the role and contributions of the off-track faculty, reconsiderations of academic freedom within the institution, the research mission of the University and funding for research as international researchers look to work elsewhere, and the rebuilding of trust and communication at the institution. Sen. D'Armiento stated that it was incumbent upon her to emphasize the continued erosion of shared governance. She noted that there were a number of unelected, parallel bodies whose membership is determined unilaterally that revise policies without consultation. Sen. D'Armiento stated that this pattern of creating parallel committees, issuing reports, and implementing decisions all without consultation or

consensus threatens the academic structures and the strength of the scholarly mission. She stated that the Senate urges the administration to return to a collaborative model of governance and for community members to remain attentive to how much is at stake.

Senator Daniel Savin (Research Officers – Professional) raised concern around academic freedom, noting that Columbia’s peer institutions like Stanford University, The University of Chicago, Carnegie Mellon University, and Yale University provide academic freedom for research officers but that Columbia does not provide academic freedom protections for research officers. Sen. Savin notes that Columbia was in the minority by not providing these protections to research officers.

Senator Ovita Williams (TTOT, SSW) thanked Sen. D’Armiento for her report and asked her what exactly the Senate’s role was in selecting President-Designate Mnookin. Sen. D’Armiento responded that there were two separate issues here: first, there was a search committee that selected a new exciting leader for this institution and, as she said before, there is great excitement for the selection of President-Designate Mnookin. However, in both the [University Statutes](#) and the [Trustees’ By-Laws](#), the Senate is supposed to be consulted in the selection of both the President and Provost, noting that the details of that process is outlined in the Trustees’ By-Laws. Sen. D’Armiento noted that, as outlined in the University Statutes and Trustees’ By-Laws, the Senate was not consulted in the process for the selection of President-Designate Mnookin but that this did not diminish the Senate Executive Committee’s excitement for the new President.

Resolution to Approve an Academic Program Leading to the Ph.D. in Educational Neuroscience (Teachers College) (Education)

Sen. D’Armiento introduced a resolution to [approve a PhD in Educational Neuroscience at Teachers College](#) coming from the Education Committee. Sen. D’Armiento introduced Associate Professor and Director of Neuroscience and Education and Director of the Neurocognition Lab Kay James and Director of Academic Affairs Compliance Katie Ledwell from Teachers College to speak on the resolution. Sen. D’Armiento then turned the meeting over to Senator Letty Moss-Salentijn (Ten., CDM), Co-Chair of the Education Committee.

Sen. Moss-Salentijn reviewed the [proposal](#) with the Senate as detailed in the plenary materials. She stated that the proposal arose because of the advances that had been made recently in brain imaging technology and research methods in neuroscience, which allow for more detailed studies of the neurobiological processes of development, learning, memory, and other cognitive processes. Sen. Moss-Salentijn stated that the program utilizes the strengths of the other research programs in educational neurosciences at Teachers College that are well-regarded. She stated that the Education Committee set up a subcommittee that studies the proposal and met with members of Teachers College to discuss the program. Sen. Moss-Salentijn stated that the full findings from the subcommittee were submitted to the full Education Committee that reviewed and supported the resolution.

Senator Andrew Einstein (Ten., P&S) asked about the economics of the proposed program. Professor James responded that the faculty have already been working with students to conduct research in educational neuroscience already through other existing programs. She noted that students from her own lab focusing on educational neuroscience have been enrolled in different degrees at Teachers College and that the hope with this proposal is to streamline this research to make it more transparent and directly related to the work that is being done in educational neuroscience. Professor James stated that, therefore, there would be no cost or close to no cost to implement this proposal. She stated that the program has stated that they would only accept students that they can provide full funding at the institutional level, which may come through Teachers College fellowships or other funding sources that each faculty member finds for their students.

There was a motion which was seconded to propose the resolution. The resolution passed 73-0-0 (in favor-opposed-abstention).

Introduction of a Proposal for a Professor of Instruction Track (Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure)

Sen. D'Armiento introduced the introduction of a [proposal for a Professor of Instruction Track](#) coming from the [Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee](#). Sen. D'Armiento stated that the proposal was included in the plenary packet to have Senators read it before discussion at the next plenary. She stated that the leaders of the subcommittee on this proposal are Senators Holger Klein (Ten., A&S/HUM), Nicole Wallack (TTOT, A&S/HUM), and Adam Cannon (TTOT, SEAS). Sen. D'Armiento stated that the purpose of mentioning the proposal today was to have everyone review it, raise questions to the subcommittee chairs, and then come prepared to the February 27th, 2026 plenary for a robust discussion.

Sen. Cannon stated that the proposal would be for a new professorial title that would convert existing the titles for Non-Tenure Track teaching faculty of Lecturer-in-Discipline (LiD) and Senior Lecturer-in-Discipline (SLiD) to a Professor of Instruction track. He stated that the rationale for this change is that the LiD/SLiD system causes difficulties in faculty recruitment and retention of the best faculty. Sen. Cannon stated that this proposal would move from a two-tier system to a three-tier system of Assistant Professor of Instruction, Associate Professor of Instruction, and Professor of Instruction. He stated that this does change the fact that these positions remain Non-Tenure Track and renewable. Sen. Cannon stated that the [review schedule](#) remains the same as the current system, except that, in year 8, a successful review would immediately trigger a promotion from Assistant Professor of Instruction to Associate Professor of Instruction. He stated that Senators would get an email with a link to a survey to help the subcommittee solicit feedback before the next plenary. Sen. Cannon stated that many concerns that he has received about the current LiD system are concerns that are related to policies at the School-level and that the current practice of the Provost's Office is to leave the implementation of the role to each School. He stated that, therefore, a lot of the current complaints are best directed toward the administration of each School or even some Departments.

Forum on University Governance (External Relations and Research Policy)

Sen. D'Armiento introduced a [proposal for two forums on University governance](#) by the [External Relations and Research Policy Committee](#). She stated that the plan would be to have two identical meetings – one uptown (March 31st) and one downtown (March 26th) – to discuss governance at Columbia, noting that one of the forums was intended to be hybrid. Sen. D'Armiento stated that both forums would occur between 5:00pm and 7:00pm. She stated that, if there were any questions, Senators should reach out to the Chairs of the External Affairs and Research Policy Committee, Senators John Santelli (Ten., SPH) and Elizabeth Adeoye (Stu., CC).

President Shipman stated that she wanted to respond to Sen. D'Armiento's earlier remarks and that she had not realized that it would potentially be useful to prepare a rebuttal to Sen. D'Armiento's earlier comments. President Shipman stated that, while she did not want to go through piece-by-piece responding to Sen. D'Armiento's claims, President Shipman felt it was appropriate to not let certain statements go uncontested. President Shipman responded that she was not on the Presidential Search Committee and that she was not a member of the Board of Trustees anymore but that she felt that it would be helpful to hear directly from the members of the Presidential Search Committee regarding consultation with the Senate in the selection process. President Shipman stated that the Presidential Search Committee would probably have a different view on what Sen. D'Armiento had noted about the lack of consultation with the Senate and that a number of people would be willing to have more conversations about what that process was. President Shipman stated that Provost Olinto and other administrations would have more to contribute but that, when it came to shared governance, this encompasses many things and committees beyond the Senate, noting that something like the [Provost's Advisory Committee on Academic Freedom](#) has been something incredibly helpful for the administration and not problematic. President Shipman stated that she would caution against the idea that other committees or bodies are renegade or inappropriate. She stated that the administration that is represented by the President are always entirely open to conversations and feedback and have made themselves available nonstop, noting that Provost Olinto has the same attitude. President Shipman encouraged anybody to reach out to the administration if they have these concerns because it is not the case. She stated that the administration has made multiple efforts to form committees and work together with the Senate but that some of this work has not happened yet and that the administration is ready to do so. President Shipman stated that she hesitated to respond to Sen. D'Armiento's comments but that she felt that it was not appropriate for Sen. D'Armiento to launch a statement without thinking about the fact that there was not an opportunity for President Shipman and the administration to respond.

Sen. D'Armiento responded to President Shipman that the Executive Committee would like to move beyond arguing over what consultation specifically refers to but would completely welcome a presentation from the members of the Presidential Search Committee to define how they consulted with the Senate. She stated that, while they will welcome the Presidential Search Committee members to a future plenary to present, the Executive Committee had emphatically stated that they commended the Presidential Search

Committee for their selection of President-Designate Mnookin. Sen. D'Armiento stated that there are many committees that have been formed and, despite the Senate working well with President Shipman, there are committees that have been formed who are making policies that have had no conversation with the Senate. She stated that this is factual and that these committees do parallel work to the Senate, noting that it is necessary for her to say so even if it is difficult and uncomfortable to state this. Sen. D'Armiento stated that this sentiment has been shared in many settings and forums and that it is important to vet and route new policies through the constituencies that are affected. She stated that there was a recent email from Provost Olinto that initiated various programs and initiatives and that it was the first time the Senate had ever seen this information. Sen. D'Armiento stated that therefore this issue needed to be discussed, even if it is uncomfortable and difficult at times. She stated that, as an example, Provost Olinto announced a new definition for bullying at the University and that, many years ago, the administration had sat and discussed with the Senate the definition of bullying that was adopted, noting that in the past the Senate spent hours meeting over this topic and held several town halls. Sen. D'Armiento stated that she did not know that there was going to be a new definition and that the Senate needed to be involved in these discussions. She stated that her earlier remarks should not be a surprise because the Senate has repeatedly raised issue with the creation of parallel committees being formed without interaction with the Senate again and again and that she would eventually have to say something.

President Shipman responded that she was not worried about surprises or discomfort and that she can deal with a lot of hard questions and issues. She stated that she thinks there are better ways to work through things together and that the administration is open to talk with and hear from any constituents. Sen. D'Armiento stated that the Provost's Advisory Committee on Academic Freedom that President Shipman had mentioned was the only new committee that has been formed that has met with the Senate and had robust conversation and that the Senate Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee is involved on issues of academic freedom. Sen. D'Armiento stated that not all of these committees interact with the Senate in the areas that the Senate should be involved. Provost Olinto asked Sen. D'Armiento to send her a list of the issues that she has problems with, noting that the [bullying committee](#) was around before Provost Olinto came to Columbia and have been working with representatives across the University but not necessarily with the Senate. Provost Olinto stated that there had been an outstanding request to complete the work of this committee and that the Provost's Office was attempting to work efficiently in quickly changing the definition of bullying. Provost Olinto stated that Sen. D'Armiento had her phone number and to contact her to discuss more. Sen. D'Armiento responded that the issues she had raised were not about the committees but were about policies being formed from committees that have not yet had interactions with the Senate. She stated that the Senate was involved when the bullying committee was formed and that, previously when final definitions were proposed, there were many conversations that the committee had with the Senate, which involved all constituencies including students. Sen. D'Armiento stated that her comments were not about details and that the Senate wanted to move forward and have policies that have been vetted through the community.

Senator Helen Han Wei Luo (Stu., GSAS/HUM) stated that she wanted to give a student perspective on the issues Sen. D'Armiento had raised, noting that the [University Statutes were changed multiple times over the summer](#) without consultation of the Senate and to override the jurisdiction of the Rules of University Conduct Committee. Sen. Luo stated that these changes were also not disclosed to the student body in a swift manner and that the changes were all policies around protesting and academic freedoms, which the [Student Affairs Committee](#) had been waiting months for clarification on. She stated that there were other concerns around matters like permanent records, noting that students found not responsible for an alleged offense will still be noted in their transcript according to the current version of the University Statutes. Sen. Luo also noted that the Rules Administrator has now been given unilateral access to evidence pertaining to a student's disciplinary case and that students who are defendant cannot get access to the case without the Rules Administrator's approval. She stated that this is all highly unusual for systems of justice and that the Student Affairs Committee has been waiting for months for clarification of their interpretation of the changes to the Rules of University Conduct but have not yet received information from the administration. Sen. Luo stated that, therefore, the issue was not just that the Senate is being sidelined in many conversations, noting that she did also believe that this was the case, but rather that the entire community is being sidelined in things like the Rules changes and that the lack of transparency is incredibly challenging for University leadership.

Senator Lydia Goehr (Ten., A&S/HUM) asked Provost Olinto and President Shipman what principle is there that a Senate resolution can be overturned by fiat. Sen. Goehr stated that she was referring specifically to the resolution that the Senate passed [addressing antisemitism](#) that was then [changed by the administration](#) without consultation with the Senate, causing enormous [controversy](#) and difficulty on the campus. She stated that she was not trying to return to a conversation about the definition of antisemitism but wanted to know from President Shipman how a Senate resolution can be overturned by the administration. Sen. D'Armiento responded that the [University Statutes state](#) that all Senate resolutions shall become final unless the Trustees consult with the Senate regarding issues with the resolution within two standard meetings. She stated that, if the Senate passes a resolution and that period of time defined in the Statutes passes without consultation, the resolution is policy. Sen. Goehr asked Sen. D'Armiento if the Trustees came to the Senate with concerns about the resolution that was passed regarding antisemitism but that she wanted to understand the pattern of resolutions being passed by the Senate that reflect the mindset of the faculty and students not being matched by administrative policy enacted. She stated that this reflected the way that trust is severely undermined by the breach between Senate work and committees and then new administrative committees that undermine the work of the Senate by imposing things without consultation with the Senate. President Shipman responded that she did not have an answer to the specific question but that she believed there was a better way to address these concerns and that there needed to be a way to discuss the discrete issues while still moving forward with a commitment to shared governance. Sen. D'Armiento responded that she thinks a lot of these discussions could be had at the forum that the External Relations and Research Policy will be holding. She stated that she does want to move forward in collaboration with the administration.

Campus Climate: Gym Access and Dining Hall Initiatives (Student Affairs)

Sen. D'Armiento introduced the presentation on campus climate from the Student Affairs Committee. She turned the meeting over to Student Affairs Committee Co-Chair Matthew Beck (Stu. (Graduate), SEAS) and Vice Chair Sen. Luo.

Sen. Luo began the [presentation on the updates to gym access](#). She stated that the Student Affairs Committee was excited to launch the partnership with Wellhub to address dissatisfaction with Dodge Fitness Gym. Sen. Luo stated that Wellhub was a private company that would offer a Columbia-subsidized, subscription-based service using a tier system ranging from affordable to luxury pricing options, which she noted would hopefully allow students to have flexibility in their options. She noted that Dodge Gym was built in 1974 for a student population of 15,000, which now has almost doubled without an expansion to the gym. Sen. Luo stated that there has been [frequent and longstanding dissatisfaction](#) with the gym. She showed [photographs](#) of maintenance issues and height restrictions from a recent visit to Dodge Gym. Sen. Luo reviewed the [first three tiers](#) through Wellhub, noting that the [Starter+ Tier](#) had the most access to the Morningside Heights area. She noted that, since launching the program two weeks ago, 4,000 students had clicked the link to register and that about 1,000 of the students have accounts. Sen. Luo stated that about 50% of the 1,000 students who have accounts have the Free Digital Tier and that 20% have the Starter+ Tier. She stated that a handful of the users had the Diamond Tier subscription, noting that these were most likely varsity athletes. Sen. Luo stated that there was a possibility for an Aetna Reimbursement for up to \$200 for every 6 months that requires substantial documentation to access. She thanked President Shipman, Executive Vice President for University Life and Wellbeing Melanie Bernitz, and University Life for helping to create the Wellhub partnership.

Sen. Beck stated that, in the last two weeks, the Student Affairs Committee has received more positive emails about the Wellhub partnership than any other email they have sent. Sen. Luo stated that University Life shared a document that also showed positive early feedback. Sen. D'Armiento noted that President Shipman began working on this early in the summer and thanked her for her work on this initiative. President Shipman responded that the student Senators came to her with the idea and noted that she was impressed by the way that the student Senators negotiated this deal. She stated that this was an example of a creative and resourceful solution to an issue on campus.

Sen. Thaddeus thanked the Student Affairs Committee for pursuing this. He noted that he has used Dodge Gym for 26 years and that the state of the gym is borderline dangerous because of how crowded it is. Sen. Thaddeus stated that he joined Equinox Gym two years ago, which costs over \$3,000 a year, and that he was shocked how many Columbia students were there. He stated that this was in effect already a multi-tier system at the University based on whether some people could afford better access than others. Sen. Thaddeus stated that he worried that the tier-based subscription model with Wellhub might further exacerbate inequality among the student body and that he worries something similar might happen with dining. Sen. Beck responded that the Student Affairs Committee felt that this was a good solution for now and the Digital Tier was free and offered some resources that could augment the experience with Dodge

Gym. He also added that this was designed as a short-term fix while working with the University to address issues around Dodge Gym. Sen. Luo responded that the existing inequalities surrounding access to Columbia's gym reminds her of the [1968 protests](#). She stated this is a sensitive issue for the community and is really a conversation around justice and access and that the solution here was something that allowed everyone to better off without increasing student fees. Sen. Luo stated that the hope is that everyone is slightly better off with Wellhub, even if it is not a perfect solution and that the congestion will be reduced at Dodge Gym regardless of whether you can afford the Wellhub subscriptions.

Sen. Beck began the [presentation on the Student Affairs Committee's dining reform initiative](#). He reviewed the [current options for dining](#), noting that there was a big difference in what was available for undergraduate students versus graduate students on campus. Sen. Beck stated that graduate students have significantly inferior dining options compared to undergraduate students. He stated that congestion is the major issue in the dining halls, with an estimate of 6,500 to 7,500 students enrolled in the dining plans but that Columbia Dining facilities can only accommodate 4,000 students. Sen. Beck stated that the [numbers show an intense amount of congestion](#) in the dining halls. He stated that there is a large disparity between the [enrollment numbers of undergraduate students versus graduate students](#) for the dining plans. Sen. Beck stated that, even if graduate students were to be brought into the dining plan, there would be no space for them. He stated that the Student Affairs Committee has estimated that 65.5% of graduate students cannot afford the Columbia Dining meal plans, noting that the high cost makes it so that there is almost no affordable way to eat on campus versus eating off campus. Sen. Beck also noted that the hours for campus dining for graduate students is very limited, especially on the weekend. He reviewed potential [short-term solutions for the dining issues](#), including outdoor seating, food trucks, and subsidized meal plans. Sen. Beck also reviewed [long-term solutions to the dining issues](#), which would mainly require constructing new dining halls.

Senator Henning Schulzrinne (Ten., SEAS) stated that there was a lot of empty space on the Manhattanville campus and wondered if repurposing that space could be useful for these dining issues. Sen. Beck responded that one of the main concerns was the lack of hours at nights and weekends, which would not be fixed by the Manhattanville campus being open, as well as safety concerns. He noted that Princeton University has a dining hall within each residential unit, providing service close and available to students. Sen. Beck stated that this is the type of service that Columbia should aspire to.

Senator Heidi Allen (Ten., SSW) stated that she was aware of the issue because she was the mother of a first-year student. She noted that meal [Plans A, B, and C](#) all offer between 6 and 21 guest meals and that she had asked her son to invite her to campus to have a meal with him but that he responded that there would never be space for him to get seats for a meal. Sen. Allen stated that she asked her son if he had used his guest swipes at all and that he had responded he had not because the gates being locked had made it difficult to bring guests on campus. She stated that, since there were likely many students with unused guest swipes, if there was a possibility or way for unused guest swipes to be donated to a central system to give students in need meal swipes. Sen. Allen stated that, as a parent, she was frustrated that there were

swipes her student could not use and stated that her student would be happy to donate unused swipes to a student that was going hungry. Sen. Beck responded that there is a large student population with unused swipes at the end of the semester that try to swipe friends in at the end of the semester and that there is another population of students who essentially do not use their meal swipes at all throughout the semester because of the level of congestion in the dining halls. He stated that this was a huge problem and that Sen. Allen's suggestion was a good idea. President Shipman responded that the administration was working to compile a lot of data around dining through a new committee that Sen. Beck would serve on. She stated that she asked Executive Vice President for University Facilities and Operations David Greenberg to attend the plenary to share some data but that there was likely not time to do so. President Shipman stated that there was progress on opening up Faculty House for undergraduate students and in the future graduate students. Sen. D'Armiento stated that the Senate would raise these issues on the new committee with the administration and then come back to present later in the spring on more detailed solutions for dining.

Sen. D'Armiento adjourned the meeting and noted that the February 27th, 2026 Plenary would be in-person.

Respectfully submitted,

Senate staff

Proposal for a Professor of Instruction Track Spring 2026

The Lecturer-in-Discipline community has long been a critical part of Columbia University, actively contributing to teaching, advising and administrative efforts across campus. To recognize the crucial contributions of this group, the Office of the Provost has proposed for the review of the Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee a **three-tiered Professor of Instruction track that includes Assistant, Associate and Professor of Instruction ranks for current and future faculty in renewable, non-tenure-eligible positions.**

The current Lecturer-in-Discipline (LiD) structure at Columbia is a two-tiered track with progression from the LiD rank to the Senior Lecturer-in-Discipline (SLiD) rank.¹ Reviews occur in year 1 of counted service (Confirming Review), 3 (Developmental Review), 5 (Critical Review), and 7 (Major Review), when the promotion to SLiD in year 8 is possible, though not guaranteed. The Major Review is followed by continuing reviews, usually at four-year intervals.

The new proposed **Professor of Instruction** track remains non-tenure-track faculty appointment with a renewable stated term. What is new is that it would be comprised of the following three tiers:

- **Assistant Professor of Instruction:** Entry-level, requires PhD (or its professional equivalent e.g., JDs), a minimum of seven years of teaching before qualifying for a major review to be considered for promotion to the next rank of Associate Professor of Instruction. The major review for promotion must take place by the 8th year of service.
- **Associate Professor of Instruction:** Requires PhD (or its professional equivalent e.g., JDs), a minimum of eight years of teaching, and if the individual is an external hire, the passing of the major review must occur before the end of the first year of appointment.
- **Professor of Instruction:** Requires PhD (or its professional equivalent e.g., JDs), a minimum of 12 years of teaching, substantial evidence of not just pedagogical excellence but also academic leadership, and if the individual is an external hire, the passing of the major review must occur before the end of the first year of appointment.

¹ An “Associate in Discipline” title exists but is only used for those hired without PhDs and is not a formal part of the current promotional ladder for LiDs.

Reviews and Promotions: Prior to a major review in year 8 and promotion to Associate Professor of Instruction, Assistant Professors of Instruction are expected to be reviewed within years 1 of counted service (Confirming Review), 3 (Developmental Review), and 5 (Critical Review), just as LiDs currently are expected to complete.

Promotion criteria: Metrics for **promotion** of Professor of Instruction from one rank to the next are defined at the school level. Evidence of excellence in teaching, recognition in pedagogical expertise and promise and future trajectory, both in the classroom and as an academic leader, are typical metrics for evaluation. Faculty on this track are expected to pursue professional development and move from Assistant Professor of Instruction to Associate Professor of Instruction; schools are expected to support the professional development of faculty on this track. Should an individual not pass the major review for promotion, the school is expected to issue a letter of nonrenewal with a one-year notice period.

There is no absolute requirement for the progression from Associate Professor of Instruction to Professor of Instruction, though we highly recommend that schools provide the resources for professional development so that individuals can pass that promotional review.

In addition to the substantive reviews that are held to determine promotion to a higher rank, schools will continue to conduct **continuing reviews** at 5-year intervals (with either a recommendation for an additional term, or a recommendation for non-renewal) to ensure on-going pedagogical excellence. Review criteria for continuing reviews are determined at the school-level. If the review for promotion from Associate Professor of Instruction to Professor of Instruction occurs before five years pass after the promotion from Assistant Professor of Instruction to Associate Professor of Instruction, the review would count as a continuing review as well and there would be no need for another continuing review for another five years (assuming the promotion to Professor of Instruction is successful).

As this remains a non-tenure-track instructional appointment with a stated term, should the individual not pass the Confirming Review, Developmental Review, Critical Review, Major Review, or any continuing reviews, they would receive a letter of nonrenewal. Per the Faculty Handbook, a full-time nontenured faculty member whose appointment will not be renewed beyond its stated term is entitled to clear and unambiguous notice of nonrenewal in writing. The notice

must be given in advance of the expiration of their appointment along the lines stipulated in the [Faculty Handbook](#). The sole exception is when an Associate Professor of Instruction does not pass the promotional review to Professor of Instruction. In such cases, they can be permitted to remain at the Associate tier and continue to be evaluated with continuing reviews. However, we strongly encourage Schools to continue to support their pedagogical development so that they can move along the promotional ladder successfully.

Current full-time LiDs and SLiDs with renewable appointments who have been hired through an open search with full clearance will have the option of remaining in the LiD/SLiD track or transitioning to the Professor of Instruction track with their Dean's approval.² LiDs/SLiDs will have until the end of the following academic year, once the announcement of the new track is made, to decide whether to move. If they do transition, they would be appointed on a January 1 or July 1 appointment date. The transition from the lecturer structure to the Professor of Instruction track would be along the following lines: current LiDs would transfer to Assistant Professor of Instruction, while Senior LiDs would transfer to either the Associate or Full Professor of Instruction depending on years of experience and on meeting the qualitative metrics of the specific rank. For distinctions between the LiD/SLiD track and the Professor of Instruction track, please see appendix A. One notable difference, for example, is that the LiD/SLiD track allows for LiDs to pass a major review and not be promoted. For Assistant Professors of Instruction, if one passes the Major Review by year 8, one must be promoted.

New Special Instructional Faculty hires holding a PhD (or its professional equivalent e.g., JDs) with renewable appointments would generally be hired into the Professor of Instruction track at the appropriate rank. Those who are hired at the Associate and Full Professor of Instruction ranks would have to undergo an immediate "major" or advanced review at least by the end of the first year of their appointment.

Once the new track is established, the **Teaching Professor** title that was proposed by the Provost Office in 2023, and then, proposed and adopted by the Senate on November 17, 2023, would be changed to **Teaching Professor with Distinction**. This title would not be part of the promotional

² The request for the transfer will need to be submitted to the Dean's office, and once the Dean's approval is granted, submitted to the Provost Office for final approval.

track but would be an exceptional honor conferred by Schools to truly extraordinary and highly experienced members of the full-time non-tenure-track teaching faculty who are at the rank of Senior Lecturer in Discipline or Professor of Instruction. Its new name is meant to capture the exceptional honor of the title. The Office of the Provost recommends that Schools utilize a formal nomination process for the Teaching Professor with Distinction title that relies upon detailed dossiers with external recommendations, teaching awards, student letters, and faculty review. Schools should cap this number at 5% of their full faculty. Faculty who have already been nominated and selected for the current Teaching Professor title, would be automatically transferred to the new title of Teaching Professor of Distinction.

Appendix A

Table 1: Lecturer in Discipline/ Senior Lecturer in Discipline Track

LiD/SLiD Track	Typical Time in Rank	Review Schedule	Promotion Outcome	Appointment Terms
Lecturer- in-Discipline (LiD)	~7 years before Major Review	Year 1: Confirming Year 3 (or 2 in the A&S): Developmental Year 5: Critical Year 7: Major Review	May pass major review but promotion not guaranteed	Non-tenure-track appointment with stated term; renewable based on reviews
Senior Lecturer- in-Discipline (SLiD)	Indefinite; continuing reviews at 4- or 5-year intervals depending on School	Reviews every 4 years post-Major Review, or every 5 years in the A&S	Remain SLiD after promotion; no further promotion required	Non-tenure-track appointment with stated term; renewable with ongoing reviews

Table 2: Professor of Instruction Track

PoI Track	Typical Time in Rank	Review Schedule	Promotion Outcome	Appointment Terms
Assistant Professor of Instruction	~7 years before Major Review	Year 1: Confirming Year 3: Developmental Year 5: Critical By Year 8: Major Review	Must pass major review to be promoted; if not, receive letter of nonrenewal	Non-tenure-track appointment with stated term; failure to pass any review triggers nonrenewal with notice as specified in the faculty handbook
Associate Professor of Instruction	Minimum 4 years before next promotion consideration	Immediate Major Review within 1st year of appointment (if hired at this rank). Reviewed every 5 years (with 6th year as terminal year). For those individuals who do not pass the review, notice of non-renewal needs to be consistent with the schedule specified in the faculty handbook.	Promotion to Full is recommended but not required; failing reviews leads to nonrenewal	Non-tenure-track appointment; renewable with ongoing successful reviews
Professor of Instruction	Indefinite with continuing reviews at 5- year intervals	Immediate Major Review within 1st year of appointment (if hired at this rank). Reviewed every 5 years (with 6th year as terminal year) For those individuals who do not pass the review, notice of non-renewal needs to be consistent with the schedule specified in the faculty handbook.	No further mandatory promotion; failure of any review leads to nonrenewal	Non-tenure-track appointment; renewable with continued demonstrated excellence

Table 3: Track Comparison

LiD vs. PoI	Lecturer in Discipline/ Senior Lecturer in Discipline Track	Professor of Instruction Track
Rank	Lecturer-in-Discipline (LiD) → Senior Lecturer-in-Discipline (SLiD)	Assistant Professor of Instruction → Associate Professor of Instruction → Professor of Instruction
Typical Time in Rank	~7 years before major review for LiD; SLiD indefinite with 4-year reviews	Assistant: ~7 years before major review; Associate: ~4 years before next review; Professor: indefinite with ongoing reviews
Review Schedule	Year 1: Confirming Year 3 (or 2 in A&S): Developmental Year 5: Critical Year 7: Major Review then every 4 years (or 5 in the A&S)	Year 1: Confirming Year 3: Developmental Year 5: Critical by Year 8: Major Review (Assistant → Associate); then every 5 years
Promotion Outcome	Can pass major review but not be promoted (depends on school)	Must pass major review → mandatory promotion; failure at the major review = nonrenewal
Post- Major Review	SLiDs reviewed every 4 years; remain at rank indefinitely	Associates reviewed every 5 years; can be considered for Full but not required
Appointment Terms	Non-tenure-track appointment with stated term; renewable based on reviews	Non-tenure-track appointment with stated term; failure to pass any review triggers letter of nonrenewal with notice as specified in faculty handbook
Path for Existing Faculty	N/A (current structure)	Current LiDs → Assistant PoI Current SLiDs → Associate or Full PoI (based on experience & metrics)
Exceptional Honor	Teaching Professor (capped at 5% of faculty; formal nomination required)	Teaching Professor with Distinction (capped at 5% of faculty; formal nomination required)

University Senate Commission on the Status of Women | Hadden Epstein Statement

February 16, 2026

The Commission on the Status of Women issues this statement in continuity with the positions we articulated in 2023 and again in 2025, when we called on the University to respond to gender-based harm with transparency, accountability, and a survivor-centered commitment to institutional repair.

In October 2023, the University Senate unanimously adopted a resolution addressing institutional failures revealed by the Robert Hadden case. The Commission joined colleagues across the Senate in expressing grave concern — not only about the harm experienced by patients, but about the profound breakdowns in oversight and accountability that allowed that harm to persist for decades. We called then for an independent investigation and a publicly shared report so the community could understand how these failures occurred and how they would be prevented in the future.

Two years later, that report has still not been released.

Now, new disclosures have emerged linking university affiliates to Jeffrey Epstein through materials released by federal authorities. We do not presume to adjudicate individual responsibility or speculate beyond verified information. However, while some argue that Epstein had “paid his debt to society,” the continuation of institutional and professional engagement with him after a conviction involving the exploitation of minors raises profound ethical concerns for a university entrusted with safeguarding students, patients, and the broader community. It underscores the need for clear principles guiding donor relationships and institutional affiliation.

These developments raise broader questions about how academic institutions set ethical boundaries when prestige, funding, and access intersect, **particularly where donor relationships or governance affiliations create the appearance that ethical standards vary depending on power, access, or institutional proximity.** Informal networks can become conduits for legitimacy and influence. When this happens, institutional silence and uneven responses amplify the harm. For many women and gender-marginalized members of our community, the deeper injury lies in the awareness that **accountability depends on power or visibility rather than consistent standards.**

The convergence of these developments, continued absence of the independent Hadden report, and new ethical concerns related to Epstein connections have deepened uncertainty and further eroded trust in the University administration and Board of Trustees. The University has taken some actions in response to recent disclosures, but those responses have appeared uneven and difficult for the community to understand. It is a sad irony that University consequences regarding Epstein entanglements for **current** employees have targeted only women. For the women who work, study, teach, and receive care at our institution, these are not abstract governance issues. They shape whether survivors believe they will be heard and whether faculty, staff, and students feel protected by institutional processes, and whether leadership is willing to confront difficult truths when they arise.

We recognize the depth of distress this moment has caused across our community, including survivors and those who support them. That distress underscores the urgent need for transparency and institutional repair.

As a Commission charged with advancing equity, dignity, and opportunity for women across the University, we believe that apologies and assurances, while necessary, are not sufficient. Trust is built through transparency. Accountability requires ACTION and clarity. Institutional repair cannot occur while critical information remains withheld.

We therefore reiterate and renew our calls for:

- **The immediate release of the independent Hadden investigative report**, with appropriate safeguards for survivors. There should be an accounting of any involvement of the Board of Trustees and University administration in the finished product, including a timeline of delivery to the University and the public release of the report.
- **Clear and consistent communication about how the University evaluates ethical concerns** involving affiliates and donor relationships, including publicly articulated standards and processes. The University should conduct an independent review of donor vetting and reputational-risk governance to ensure that ethical considerations align with the University's obligations to safeguard women and other vulnerable members of our community.
- **Meaningful engagement with governance bodies, including this Commission**, in strengthening structures that ensure safety, fairness, and accountability.
- **The establishment of a standing mechanism for consulting** with faculty governance bodies on matters involving gender-based harm, ethical risk, and institutional response.

Our intention is not to inflame speculation or assign blame without process. Rather, we seek to uphold the standards that define an ethical academic institution: accountability, responsibility, and a willingness to learn from past failures. Until those standards are fully evident in practice, many women on this campus will continue to question whether their well-being is an institutional priority.

Endorsed by:

Commission on the Status of Women

Commission on Diversity

External Relations and Research Policy Committee

Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee

Research Officers Committee

Student Affairs Committee

Statement on Hadden Report Delays
University Senate Student Affairs Committee
February 24, 2026

In response to the ongoing delays in the release of the Hadden Report, as well as new and alarming documents linking Columbia affiliates to Epstein, the Student Affairs Committee expresses profound disappointment and condemnation at the University's lack of transparency and accountability in addressing matters relating to sexual misconduct and the welfare of gender minorities.

Over the last weeks we have received distressing communications from many Hadden survivors, informing us they have *never* been contacted by the independent investigative firm contracted by Columbia to conduct the Hadden report. While in the December Senate Plenary President Shipman said that the investigative firm was being "thorough" in their research, which involved the "interviewing and reinterviewing" of many individuals involved¹, we find it alarming that such an approach would leave out the testimony of a broad population of victims. This oversight raises serious questions regarding the methodology of the investigation as well as the integrity of those overseeing it. By comparison, the 2021 independent investigation of the abuses of Robert Anderson at the University of Michigan Ann Harbor, which collected the testimonies of over 300 victims, achieved roughly a 50% victim response rate in just 14 months of work.² It goes without saying the testimonies of the Hadden victims are profoundly distressing and it is an indication of systematic failures at Columbia that student Senators have had to grapple with the aftermath and the burden of this knowledge, as opposed to the Administration responsible for the leadership of this University. We acknowledge that the details of the investigation are, rightly, left in control of the independent firm. Nevertheless, we ask that the Administration consider whether the indefinite withholding of the Hadden report would constitute breach of contract with the investigative firm, and as delays persist, for the Administration to provide concrete updates as to its immediate next steps.

We also note a pernicious and hypocritical double standard at Columbia regarding student conduct and the conduct of those in positions of power and privilege. The Administration has over the last two years, repeatedly called for police enforcement on student protestors, including peaceful protestors,

¹https://senate.columbia.edu/sites/senate.columbia.edu/files/content/Plenary%20Binders%202025-26/US_Plenary%20Binder_20251212-R-PP.pdf

² https://regents.umich.edu/files/meetings/01-01/WH_Anderson_Report.pdf

becoming increasingly harsh in disciplining students for exercising their right to free speech and protest. Yet we have seen no comparable enthusiasm for disciplining individuals who protected Hadden and allowed for his continued criminal activity, or the individuals implicated in the Epstein files. Although Columbia remains eager to punish the teenager marching on south lawn with a sign, it is comparatively indifferent to the activities of the perpetrators of and abettors to sexual violence. In the former case, the student must be punished *immediately*, disregarding the standard procedures of justice, and in the latter case, nothing is done after years of delays, with individuals implicated in the Hadden and Epstein cases remaining in positions of power. The takeaway from this double standard and the last two years of increasing security and surveillance on campus, is that Columbia's interest appears not to be in protecting its students, faculty, or staff, but rather, individuals in power who abuse the privileges of their position.

Declaration by the Committee on the Rules of University Conduct

As the Student Affairs Committee documented in its report, “[Changes to the Rules of University Conduct](#),” presented at the October 3, 2025 plenary, the Board of Trustees enacted substantive changes to the University Statutes in July and August 2025. These changes were made unilaterally, and, as the report noted, without fully informing the university community. Many of the statutory amendments concerned Chapter 44, The Rules of University Conduct.

Among other consequences, these statutory revisions effectively overturned decades of university policies, procedures, norms, and traditions. In particular, they voided the historical role of the Senate and its Committee on the Rules of University Conduct (Rules Committee) as the principal policy-making body charged with safeguarding rights of free speech, protest, and associated due process within the Columbia community.

Beyond the shared governance implications, the recent amendments to Chapter 44 raise substantive questions about the due process protections afforded to students under the revised disciplinary framework. While we cannot elaborate on each of those in this statement, the Rules Committee believes it is important to register our general concern for the principles of fairness and due process, as well as for community trust in the Rules of University Conduct.

The Student Affairs Committee’s report catalogued these multiple statutory changes in detail. We join them in expressing concern not only about the substance of several of the statutory revisions, but also about the manner in which they were enacted by the Trustees: without Senate consultation, without any meaningful engagement with the broader University community, and without due regard for the expertise embodied in the Rules Committee.

The statutory amendments adopted by the Trustees in July and August 2025 removed all references to the Senate Rules Committee, which historically was authorized by the University Statutes to survey the Columbia community about potential revisions to the Rules of University Conduct, propose revisions to the Senate for approval and acceptance by the Trustees, and prepare materials to facilitate the functioning of disciplinary procedures. Such authority has effectively been transferred to the Office of the Provost.

A more recent amendment from August 2025 to Chapter II, Section 23 of the Statutes, which defines the policy-making powers of the University Senate, expressly rescinded the Senate’s authority to promulgate codes of conduct related to the Rules of University Conduct. Section 23.i now states that the Senate shall “Promulgate a code of conduct for faculty, students and staff and provide for its enforcement, provided that such code shall not include any of the matters addressed in Article XLIV of the Statutes [The Rules of University Conduct], any University

policy on discrimination or harassment or any policy administered by the Center for Student Success and Intervention (or successor group).”

In December 2025, the Provost created an Advisory Committee on Conduct and Accountability (ACCA), charging it with responsibilities that historically resided in the Senate’s Rules Committee. Unlike the Rules Committee, however, this advisory committee to the Provost operates outside the deliberative processes of the University Senate and is not accountable, through election or public plenary discussion, to the University community.

Notwithstanding the statutory revisions adopted by the Trustees and the new committee created by the Provost to duplicate its work, the Committee on the Rules of University Conduct remains a duly constituted committee of the University Senate under the Senate’s bylaws. These bylaws stipulate that the Rules Committee “shall have jurisdiction to review and recommend revision of rules of University conduct, as well as the means of enforcing those rules.” (Sec. 4.k.viii).

Therefore, the Senate Rules Committee intends to continue its mandated work out of a commitment to the ideals and practices of shared governance and with the full expectation that its deliberations will inform future policy changes.

Consistent with its longstanding mandate, the Rules Committee is currently developing proposed revisions to the Rules of University Conduct as set forth in the Statutes that we intend to bring to the full Senate later this spring for consideration, debate, and possible endorsement. We recognize that, under the amended Statutes, such recommendations no longer carry the formal statutory implications they previously enjoyed. Nonetheless, we believe it remains imperative to fulfill our democratic duty within a framework of shared governance and to serve as a channel through which the voices of the Columbia community may be expressed, particularly on matters of free expression and due process.