

# Dean's Office debuts student bartending classes

By [Cynthia Hua](#), Staff Reporter

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Students who want to learn to bartend can now do so on Yale's dime.

The Yale College Dean's Office will host three free bartender-training sessions beginning Jan. 28 in an effort to raise awareness about alcohol and decrease high-risk drinking. The training includes a two-hour course in mixology and a four-hour course in Training and Intervention Procedures (TIPS) — a national program designed to reduce risky drinking by improving the knowledge and intervention skills of alcohol servers. Twelve students attended a pilot training session held Dec. 10 and 11, and 30 students will be allowed at each spring event.

“We know underage people are drinking,” said Director of Yale Catering Robert Sullivan. “We're trying to see what we can do to make sure underage students understand what a drink is supposed to look and taste like.”

The courses, run by Yale Catering, are based on those Yale Catering hosts for its servers, with the exception that students do not have to be over 21 to attend because anyone over the age of 18 can legally bartend in Connecticut, Fiddler said. Students will be able to sign up online for courses in January, February and March starting next week.

TIPS training teaches alcohol safety skills such as how to interact with drunk or unruly individuals and how to tell if someone has had too much to drink, as well as alcohol awareness facts such as the amount an average person can drink based on body type and gender, Sullivan said. Course instructor Jean-Michel Mange said a large portion of the TIPS course also focuses on liability issues, a topic particularly relevant for students who plan to host dorm or fraternity parties.

“People think it's going to be moralizing, but it's not about that,” said course instructor Jean-Michel Mange. “It's to explain how technically, if you hold a party, what to do, how not to over-pour, to explain what can happen to the [host in terms of liability].”

Sullivan said that the pilot session's attendees significantly overestimated the amount of alcohol that constituted one shot. The mixology course introduces techniques that reduce alcohol intake per drink — such as serving drinks with ice and using a pourer to regulate the amount of alcohol in a drink — and pourers were passed out to each attendee, he said.

Four members of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity, several members of the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity and as representatives from other student organizations participated in the pilot bartending training session, said Sig Ep President Will Kirkland '14. Kirkland said he felt the training session was useful overall, but it was tailored to skills for professional bartenders or servers and did not necessarily relate to members of student organizations.

“From a bartender perspective it was really useful,” he said. “But maybe it’s not all as applicable if you’re having a frat party.”

Another attendee, Paul Wasserman '14, thought the mixology course was successful in “proving excessive [hard alcohol] is not needed for a good drink.” He said he does not think the courses will change the mindsets of students who aim to get “very drunk,” but they will help prevent students from drinking too much unintentionally.

The Dean’s Office does not currently have a plan to measure the effectiveness of the training sessions, and Fiddler said whether the program will continue depends on its popularity and how it fits with other alcohol-related programming from the YCDO.